



Warning: this book has zero plot and runs on vibes only...

We are all monster fuckers here.

If you don't like weird peens, demons who change gender, and wanton women... this is your sign to turn back.

For everyone else, have fun!

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This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

The Price of Silence

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Note

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, business, events and incidents are the products of the author's imagination. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental.

Before moving forward, please note that the themes in this book can be dark and trigger some people. The themes can include but are not limited to: sexual assault, dubious consent, death, gore, domestic abuse, and violence.

If you need help, please reach out to the resources below.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-8255

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-7233

<https://www.thehotline.org/>

The Sweetest Sacrifice

ELLE MAE

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Chapter 1

Ruby

I had thought that moving to a city, far outside the city of Seattle, where there was less than five thousand people would be the break that I had been waiting for. Life had run together, and I couldn't stand the people or the life any longer, so this would be my new start. A peaceful time where I could just keep to myself and not worry about anything else.

But I was so very wrong.

From the outside, Black Diamond seemed to be the perfect place to run away to. The town was small, the people kept to themselves, and the space was far cheaper than anything in Seattle. Perfect for someone who didn't want to be found, perfect for me.

When I drove into the town with my Corolla packed to the brim, I got my first whiff that something was wrong. Although the town had been decorated in spooky Halloween décor, an odd feeling hung in the air as I worked my car through the town. The streets may have been nearly empty, but when there were people out on the sidewalk, they would turn and stare at me. It was hard not to shiver when the eyes felt like they were burning holes into my car's windows.

I shuddered when my eyes locked with a particularly mean-looking older man's. He was wearing a button-up with loose slacks and looked similar to every other businessperson I had seen on the streets of Seattle. . . except the large shotgun that was perched on his shoulder. That gun alone commanded my attention but, paired with the man holding it, was pure nightmare fuel.

I swallowed my fear and sped up, ignoring the lingering looks.

When the realtor showed me this house over our FaceTime, I was in love with the open porch and bay windows. It felt cozy, safe, and the windows made it seem more open. Not to mention the outside was great for the price I was paying. It stood only one story high, had light gray paint and black trimmings. It fit well into the space around it, and I knew that it would look particularly eerie when Halloween night came around, though I was sure I wouldn't have time to decorate.

The yard could use some work. It hadn't had a good watering in god knows how long, and there were weeds every few feet. . . but the interior was perfect. With dark hardwood floors and an open concept, I just knew that I would be at peace here. There were three bedrooms and two baths, which was way more space than I needed, but I wanted an office separate from my room and maybe once Libby. . .

My heart constricted in my chest at the thought of my younger sister. Her blonde hair and shining eyes were ones that I would never forget. . . especially when they were bloodied and dark the last time I saw them. I sometimes forgot that she was no longer among the living, and every time I had to remember how she died, it was like a shock to my system. She had been against me moving away, but when she had died one night in a horrific car accident. . . I couldn't stay anymore. I was already planning on leaving, but that heartbreak was the final straw.

And now I was alone.

I had been looking at this place before she had passed and planned to make one room hers so she could have it whenever she came over. . . but now I guess it would stay forever empty.

I smiled as I drove through the neighborhood and up to the house that awaited me. Everyone had their decorations out for Halloween, which was in just a few short days. From spider webs to big blow-up skeletons, the place looked like it was ready for trick-or-treaters. I noted that I would have to go to the store in town and buy some

decorations for the house and maybe some candy for the kids. I didn't plan to do anything special, maybe watch a movie and hand out candy. . . but that would all depend on my mood when the time came. It had been hard to be happy about anything as of late.

I pulled into the long driveway and turned off my car before stepping out into the crisp air. It had rained earlier; I could tell by the fresh scent of the lawn and water that still stained the concrete of the driveway. I inhaled it selfishly, enjoying the moments of peace.

This is what I am here for, I thought as a moment of stillness passed over me. No rush. No pressure. Just me, and this house.

With a happy sigh, I collected my purse from the passenger side door, along with my laptop, and walked toward the house. The porch creaked as I walked across it, and I immediately caught sight of a few crooked nails that I noted would need to be fixed in the next few weeks. The keys were hidden under the doormat—how original—and I let myself in. I turned on every light as I passed, not wanting to be left in the shadows of the creaky, old house for long.

The realtor told me they would have it cleaned before they left, and sure enough, my nose tickled with the scent of chemicals. Without a moment to waste, I put my stuff down on an all-white kitchen island and began opening the windows. The cold air rushed in, and I inhaled deeply while staring out at the darkening grassy area around the house. At that moment, it really did feel like it was just little ol' me here with this vast amount of space—and opportunity—in front of me.

This house came with about an acre of land, and it would be perfect if I ever got to it, but I reminded myself to slow down as the lists of to-dos were piling on top of each other.

“One step at a time, Ruby.” My sister had said this when I used to nag her about the state of her house. It was not that I was a neat freak. . . I just wanted to make sure my baby sister had everything she needed to be successful in her life. Everything that I never had.

I cleared my throat against the knot that had gathered and headed back outside to start moving stuff into the house. It was easier not to think about the hard stuff when you were busy. I got into an easy rhythm while pushing away the thoughts.

First, I would bring in the boxes and leave them near the entrance. Then, once all of the boxes were brought in, I worked to start unpacking everything.

By the time the first box had to be hauled into the kitchen, I was sweating buckets even as the air turned cold and the outside had fallen dark. As much as it bothered me, I knew that I couldn't unpack everything, so I focused on what I could do tonight.

It will be the perishables and kitchen utensils tonight, I decided. Tomorrow will be the rest of the house.

I was lucky that I could buy this house fully furnished, so an entire kitchen awaited me, including a Samsung fridge. It was a double-door fridge and was bigger than anything I had owned before. The only downside was that it had a slight smell of fish in it, but besides that, it had also been meticulously cleaned.

I poured myself a cup of wine, though I didn't bring any wine glasses, so I poured it into a mug that was in the shape of a cat. I laughed lightly at the action. I had stopped by a Target before coming down here; I didn't know much about the town, so I had a minifreak-out when I realized that I would be home alone with no alcohol for however long it would take me to find a suitable store.

Three short knocks at the door stirred me out of my thoughts, and I had to dive to catch my beloved cat mug before it crashed to its untimely doom. Only a bit of the wine spilled on the counter and stained the oversized, white shirt that was now clinging to me from the heat of the moving. I cursed and frowned at my now-ruined shirt.

"Coming!" I yelled and placed my cup safely on the counter before running to the door.

I could see the figure outside of the door's windows, the silhouette blurred by the protective film on the glass but, guessing by the long hair and stature, it was most likely a woman.

I smoothed my hair down and flung the door open. The lady on the other side looked to be just a few years older than me and wore a flannel, though it did not do much to protect her swollen belly. A foil-wrapped baking dish was in her hands, and I had to hold back my grimace as the pungent smell of fish wafted from it.

“Oh, sorry,” she said in a sweet voice. She gave me a smile that showed all of her blindingly white teeth. Her dirty blonde hair was pulled up into a bun, and a few loose strands framed her face. “I didn’t mean to disturb you.”

She’s pretty, I thought. Though given her belly, I am assuming she doesn’t swing my way.

She leaned forward, and I flushed when I realized that all of my mess and baggage was still in the front hallway and right in her sight.

“Not at all,” I said in an equally light tone. My customer service skills were rusty, but the act was like riding a bike; you simply never forgot how to make people believe that you were having the time of your life when you just simply wanted to die. “I just got in not long ago and was unpacking.” I wiped my sweaty hands on my jeans and extended one to her. “I’m Ruby.”

Her eyes shifted toward my hand before shifting the dish in her hands and gripping my hand lightly.

“I’m Anne,” she said. “I live right across the way, the light gray one you see over there,” she pointed out toward her house, and I noted that there was the same old man that I had seen in town waiting on the porch. He was watching us intently and inhaled his cigarette before blowing it out in a puff of smoke. I was relieved to see that he did not have his gun in sight this time but wondered briefly how he had treated the baby daddy when he knocked up his daughter. “That’s

Daddy; you can call him Mr. Collins.” She grimaced lightly. “He’s a bit old-fashioned.”

I smiled back at her. “It’s nice to meet you, Anne,” I said. “I’m sure we will have a lot of time to get to know each other over margaritas one night.”

Even as I offered, I had no real intention of doing so and realized my mistake when she patted her belly.

“Oh, I cannot drink, but I am sure we will find a way to connect,” she said in a sweet tone. “This is for you. I thought with the moving and all you probably don’t have much to cook for yourself.”

I took the tray from her.

“Oh, this is perfect!” I gushed. “Thank you so much!” I paused, looking around the disheveled front room. “Would you uhh. . . like to come in?”

She shook her head before taking a step back.

“I must be getting back, just wanted to stop by before it was too late!” she said, and then, with a small wave, she ran back to her house, looking back over her shoulder as she did.

I leaned forward and watched as her father continued to stare me down. Feeling a chill run up my spine, I shook my head and shut the door. I didn’t walk away until I was sure that all the doors were locked.

Bringing the tray to the kitchen, I began shutting all the windows, and without a moment of hesitation, I dumped the dish in the trash can.

Chapter 2

Ruby

The next few days were a flurry of unpacking and following up on emails until my fingertips were numb. I hadn't taken off any time from my freelancing when I was moving and I was now beginning to regret it, though I needed the cash.

I had originally started freelancing on the side of my various minimum wage jobs to keep some interest in my life and explore the things I was truly passionate about, but it ended up far surpassing my other jobs and even allowed me an income that could keep up with life in Seattle.

I had many clients who had stayed with me throughout the years, and for that, I was grateful, but with everything else, it got overwhelming, and I found myself unable to keep up.

I kicked the side of the fridge when I realized that I hadn't packed enough food to even last for a few days. Grabbing my purse, keys, and phone, I headed out the door. Fred Meyer was a close enough drive, and I would make it quick, only stocking up on what I really needed so I could get back to my client work before it was too late.

I thought about ordering everything I needed but decided that, no matter how creepy the first pass of the town had been, I'd try my best to get out of the house. Libby was the one pushing me to always get out of the house when things became too much.

"The fresh air would be good for you!" she would say as she literally dragged me out of the house.

With everyone's eyes on me as I walked through the aisle, I only took twenty minutes to get the bare essentials and totally forgot about the Halloween candy and decorations until I got to the checkout.

Next year, I promised myself.

My eyes lingered on a bouquet of colorful flowers that were perched right by checkout, and without a second thought, I bought them as well. After I paid and shakily put everything in my cart, I hightailed it out of there.

On the way back was the first contact I had with the cemetery.

I had read about this cemetery and all of the hauntings. It was one of the reasons that I decided to move here. I always had a morbid fascination with the occult and scary movies, even if I didn't believe in them myself. And not to forget, a good old monster romance novel.

The graves there were old, and even as I drove past, I could sense a dark aura that felt permanently attached to the graveyard. Its dark tendrils seemed to reach out toward the passing cars, and it pulled the entire scene together; the dark gravestones were visible and stood straight out of the ground like beacons, begging for attention.

Libby was the believer, I said in a snide tone in my mind. Get it together, Ruby.

Even as I thought it, though, I found myself pulling into the street beside it and getting out, flowers in hand, to get a better look at the headstones that littered the cemetery. As soon as I walked through the gates, I felt a type of sticky aura around me, but I tried to chalk it up to the humidity and light sprinkle.

The clients can wait a few more hours, I thought.

I don't know what pushed me to do it, but every time I passed one of the graves that seemed to be worse for wear, I placed a flower near the headstone. It reminded me of the tradition I had with Libby when I was in middle school. Libby was still in elementary school, and once she

started to understand what death meant, she forced me away from our foster family and had me put flowers on random graves, hoping one was our parents.

I never had the heart to tell her that our parents were buried in Nevada.

When I got to the edge of the cemetery, I found a dying tree that was twisted and so ugly looking that it made me shudder. There was no marking on it, but I felt the same aura I felt earlier surrounding it, pulling me to it.

I put the rest of the flowers at the base.

A movement in my peripheral vision caused me to jump, but I saw nothing when I turned to look. Letting out a light laugh, I walked—half ran—back to my car, trying to shrug off the uneasy feeling the cemetery gave me.

When I pulled up to the house, the sprinkle had become a full-blown storm, and I had to run to the porch as fast as I could in order not to get soaked. I watched as the rain descended on the property, and my eyes trailed out to the house across from mine. That old man was sitting outside; this time, he brought his shotgun and set it on his lap while he drank his beer.

Feeling a bit rebellious, I reached into my bag, pulled out a hard seltzer, and cracked it open with one hand. I lifted my can up as if to say “cheers” to him and turned toward my door with a smile.



* * *

That night, I should have known that my dreams were trying to tell me something. . . trying to tell me to get out. To warn me of what was to come. But looking back, I don't think I would have left even if I knew the monster that awaited me.

As I slept in the overly comfortable bed that was piled high with purple blankets, a figure visited my dreams. He wouldn't get too close to me, but he was watching, and I couldn't look away for some reason. His pull was strong, and it felt like the entire room was taken up by his presence alone.

Shadows mostly hid his figure, but his red, glowing eyes shined through it all. They were brighter than I had ever seen in a human before, and they never wavered from my face. He watched me with what I wanted to assume was interest and not hunger, but the longer his eyes lingered, the less I was sure.

At first, I was frozen by my terror, but it quickly turned into something else.

First, it was excitement. An excitement that I had long since forgotten. It stirred something in my bones, and I became almost giddy with the feeling. The feeling that had been so hard to replicate was now here taking over my entire being. Then, after staring into his intense red eyes, the excitement turned into heat.

An unimaginable heat started low in my belly and began spreading across my entire body. My skin flushed and became sensitive, even against the furs of the blankets that covered me. The thin shirt I wore to bed began to stick to my body as the heat caused me to sweat.

My breathing came out rough even as the stranger stared at me. I should have been afraid; I was afraid, and I loved it. The heat coursing through me became too strong to bear. He watched my movements as I kicked off the blankets.

I wanted to ask him who he was, what he was doing here. But instead, I let my hands trail my body, stopping at my nipples. I let out a strangled moan as I plucked them; they were so sensitive just the simple movement of the fabric brushing against them caused dampness between my legs.

I imagined that dark stranger running toward me and touching me in every dirty way I could think of. I imagined the way his voice would sound as he pushed me into the mattress and took full advantage of my wantonness.

Unable to wait, I brought one hand between my legs and let out a sigh as two of my fingers massaged my pussy lips over my underwear, which

was now soaked.

He shifted at that, and it caused me to pause. This was the strangest dream I had to date, but I wanted to push further, explore more of my body and look at the reactions of the stranger that hid in the dark corner of my room as I did so. It was a dirty, sick fantasy, but it was my fantasy, and this was my dream.

Keeping my eyes locked on the man, I slipped my fingers into my panties and inserted them into my sopping wet pussy while my other hand came to pinch my clit. The slight bit of pain was dizzying, and I arched against it while trying to retain the connection with my stranger.

I had pleased myself before, but never in front of someone else, and I couldn't help but wonder if that was why the feeling was so intense. Maybe that was the reason that my orgasm came faster than ever. It was a dream; I knew that. But with his stare so intense, I felt myself tumbling violently over the edge.

I was awoken just as I came, my eyes opening wide.

It was daytime, and I sat up frantically looking for the stranger. The room was, thankfully, empty. I was disappointed at first that the ravishing stranger wasn't there to feed my sick fantasies, but as my head cleared, I became horrified. Shifting, I could feel that the wet dream was more than just a dream, and I had a mess to clean up between my legs.

I flushed, a hot wave spreading throughout my face and neck at the thought of what had just happened.

I feel like a goddamn teenage boy, I grumbled in my mind.

I crawled out of bed and jumped straight into a boiling hot shower, trying to rid myself of the memory of those red eyes that felt like they were still following me. When I was done, I let out a heavy sigh and looked at the wreck I had become in the mirror.

Since Libby's death, I had trouble sleeping, maybe getting only a few hours a night before I was unable to sleep any longer. It was great for business, but not so much for my skin or the bags under my eyes. My once smooth and tan skin looked sunken and dull. My dark eyes were seemingly losing all their light, and my black hair, even after blow-drying it, lay limp on my head.

Maybe the dream was a sign of my mental state, I thought wryly.

Bringing the ends up, I noted that I desperately needed a haircut, but I wasn't about to find one in this town; I would gladly drive back up to Seattle for that.

The rest of the day passed with little interruption. I had used the time to catch up on client work, trying to finish as much as I could before the deadline next week. I was far ahead but wanted to save some time, so I could finally get the house in better shape than it was.

The floorboards on the porch needed to be fixed, the lawn needed weeding, many windows had a draft, and even as I sat on the couch, with television shows playing in the background, I found myself noticing the uneven paint job on the walls.

Sighing, I looked toward the television and saw a rerun of my favorite sitcom. I had seen it many times, but it was good to take the edge off and make it so I didn't feel so alone in the house. Tomorrow was Halloween, and it was a time to be happy, surround myself in comfort, and pig out on candy. . . though I only had alcohol to keep me company tomorrow night.

I shivered when a cold breeze rushed through the house. I had already turned up the heater, but it seemed that the windows would cause more problems than I originally thought. Even with the blankets piled on me and the fireplace crackling with a newly lit fire, I was still freezing.

The second bedroom was only a short walk away and in an area with much fewer windows, but I was so comfortable that I didn't want to

move from my workspace. And I would rather be out here with the noise of the TV so that I wasn't so paranoid about my dream stranger.

And it's not even that I was afraid of him coming back. . . if anything that's what I wanted. But I needed to concentrate and every small movement would cause my mind to go into overdrive.

When I heard the creak in the floorboards, my whole body went into fight-or-flight mode. I liked to think that I was brave enough to be a fighter, but at that moment, when my eyes were darting around to look for the possible intruder, I was ready to run for my life.

But there was nothing there.

The house is just old, I assured myself.

Eyeing the space suspiciously, I went back to my computer. My blood froze, and a scream was pulled out of my throat when I saw a masked face in the reflection of the dark screensaver. It was a gruesome-looking face. Half of it was plain white with only the very light indents of a normal facial structure, while the other half looked like someone had pulled back the skin of the face to show a bleeding mess of tissue and bones.

Before I could bolt forward, a damp cloth covered my face. The strong smell of chemicals filled my senses, and my vision became blurry instantaneously. I tried to move, throwing my laptop away, and scrambled forward, but two arms grabbed on to my shoulders and forced me back.

The last thing I saw were two piercing green eyes as I fell into a deep sleep.

Chapter 3

Ruby

When I woke up next, the first thing I did was jolt, trying to find a way out of the monster's arms.

It didn't take long for me to understand that I was no longer in the person's arms, but instead, I found myself tied to a cold stone table with only a white slip to cover my body and no other undergarments. My wrists and ankles were bound by chains that clanked as they moved.

Tugging on them, I couldn't help but wince as they dug into my skin. I didn't know how long I was out or what happened, but the chains had already left angry marks on my skin that started to bleed as I twisted around.

The shifting in the room pulled me from my panic, and I realized that I wasn't alone. Instead, people with all sorts of different masks and dressed in all-black floor-length cloaks watched me. I was surrounded. They were in a circle around where I lay, and none of them moved as I struggled against the chains.

What the fuck is happening?

The walls and ceiling were all made of dark, cracked stone, and only a few torches lighted the place. The whole area smelled dusty and a bit damp from the earlier downpour; I could even hear the droplets as they fell to the floor. The masked men remained quiet; the only sound filling the space was my own breathing and struggling. From my position, I could see behind the people in the masks that there was a long hallway that led to the area we were in.

We are underground, I noted.

Panic began to claw at my chest, and I felt as though I couldn't breathe. There were no windows and no light from the outside. I couldn't even feel a breeze, though it was so cold that I quickly began shivering, my teeth chattering against each other.

"Who are you?" I yelled at the masked people.

No one answered; no one moved. I jerked against the chains, trying to free myself.

"Let me go!" I growled. "This isn't a funny prank!"

In unison, they each took a step forward. Tears pricked at my eyes, and I could feel myself lose the last bit of control that I had. I began pulling at the chains, ignoring the searing pain as they ripped through my skin. I bucked against the table, and an animal-like growl escaped my lips.

Three of them stepped forward; two came to hold down my legs and arms while one stood to the side and peered down at me with piercing blue eyes.

"The cops will be here soon!" I yelled and frantically tried to fight the people holding me down. "You will spend the rest of your life in jail if you don't let me go!"

There was a small huff from the man that stood over me before he pulled out a book from the hidden pockets of his cloak. He took his time in searching for the page he wanted to read from, the sound of paper against skin filling the room. It's like he was trying to make this as slow as possible, draw out the time of my suffering. He cleared his throat, causing all the masked heads to turn in unison.

"Welcome, brethren," he said in a low voice. "Today marks the one-hundredth anniversary of our work here at Black Diamond."

Letting out a yell, I jerked against the two and tried to make the person reading pay attention to me, but his eyes only lazily looked over my form before he continued.

“Our fathers and their fathers before them have all worked to protect the sanctity and prosperity of this town and its people against those who wish to take it from us.” As he finished, there were murmurs and some shouts of anger. “We are here to continue the tradition that ensures we will be taken advantage of no longer. I offer thee a single sacrifice in hopes that you may grant our wish.”

My eyes widened at his words. Tears began streaming down my face now, and I had to gasp for breath.

This can't be happening. I knew this town was fucked, but this?

“Please,” I begged him. “I have a family.”

He ignored me as if sensing the lie and continued to address the people around us.

“Tonight, we will call forth our most dangerous demon yet,” he said. “This demon has been wandering this earth since our forefathers came to this town and locked his spirit in this very tomb. With great strength and many casualties, they worked together to bind him to this crypt in hopes that he may never again cause such havoc to the town.” He paused, and only my cries filled the room. “Tonight, we release him. Begin the summoning.”

All around me, the masked men began chanting as I screamed and begged for them to stop. I yelled at them, told them about Libby, told them about the life that I had yet to live, but there was no stopping them. They were fucking insane if they thought this would do anything, but in the end, the result would be the same. . . I would die.

I wondered if Libby had this moment as she saw the semi-truck barreling toward her. How did she feel? Was it the panic and fear that

I felt now? Or was it peace at knowing her struggles would finally be over?

I had hoped that in the moments of my death that I could feel free. . . but instead, all I felt was the intense urge to fight for my life, to ensure that I got out of here even if it was to get to see another shitty, rainy day.

“I want to live,” I cried.

“Zaelex! I call on thee!” the man next to me cried, and before I even saw him reach into his cloak to pull out a weapon, I felt the sharp pain in my stomach. A pain so deep and blinding that the screams stopped in my throat, and I could only stare up at the cracking ceiling of the crypt and pray for death.

There was a moment of silence, where all the chanting stopped, and everyone waited expectantly.

What a useless death, I thought as black spots covered my vision.

There were more murmurs when they realized that the demon they were after probably wasn't coming, and the whole thing was a made-up fairytale. I would have hoped that I would have died a death that meant something; for god's sake, the least I deserved was a real demon.

A strong wind shot down the tunnel, blowing out all the torches and leaving us in complete darkness. The men around me shuffled, and I could hear some panicked whispers before a deep chuckle filled the space, echoing off the walls.

“Zaelex,” a disembodied voice said. It was deep and rough like it had been unused for years. The noise sent a shiver down my spine and ignited the same heat that I felt the night with my stranger. I had to fight to keep my eyes open. “What an old name.” There was a chuckle again. “You can call me Z.”

Bright-red eyes hovered above me before the torches alit with flames. The stranger that had been in my dreams was back, though his entire body was shrouded in a dark mist-like cloud, showing nothing but his red eyes. My heart stopped when I realized that this was not the first time I had seen him.

I wanted to reach out to him. Sink my hands into those shadows, but I was fading fast.

Is this a demon's true form? I asked in my mind. After all those years, Libby was right. . . there was more to the world than what we could see with our own two eyes.

The masked men at my side scrambled back, but the demon, Z, didn't even pay them any mind. His eyes stayed on me the entire time. I could make out his arm as he lifted it, only to bring it down to where the dagger was still lodged in my belly.

He's going to kill me, I realized. I had wanted him to save me, but I realized that it was I who the demon was supposed to feast on tonight.

His mist-covered hand gripped the dagger before pulling it out of me. I let out a scream, a blood-curdling scream that bounced off the walls. He let out another chuckle, and I watched as a long, black tongue licked the fresh blood off the dagger.

His eyes met mine once more before he took the dagger and threw it right into the chest of the man who summoned him. There was a pause before the chaos ensued.

"Silence!" he commanded in a growl. The inhuman sound radiated off the walls and froze the men in their places.

"Please," I begged as I felt the warm liquid seep out of my wound.
"Please don't hurt me."

He cocked his head to the side, his eyes searching my form.

“It has been a long time since I have been summoned,” he said, and his eyes drifted toward the man who was now kneeling on the ground, a dagger in his chest. “I wasn’t sure that I would even come.” His eyes drifted back to mine. “But you gave me such a show last night that I just couldn’t help myself.”

Holy fuck, I thought. It was him watching me.

The tears came out even harder now.

“What do you want with me?” I asked.

“It’s not what I want with you,” he said with a sigh. “Well, I want many things, but we will get to that.” I could have sworn he smiled at me. “I have a duty to fulfill now that I have been summoned.”

Dread filled me. This was it. There was no fight left in me, and even if I could, I knew that he would find me.

“Just make it quick,” I whispered and turned my head to the side.

He let out another laugh.

“What an interesting human,” he mused. “But no, I do not kill my sacrifices.” He leaned down, and I felt his long tongue trace the shell of my ear. “But I can help them out of a sticky situation if they provide me with what I need.”

“Kill her!” the masked man yelled from his crouched position. “I command you, demon! Kill her and save our town!”

The demon pulled back, staring at me.

“I do not answer to you,” he said; each word was like a new bit of life thrown back into me. “The only person I will answer to is the one right in front of me.”

I blinked at him.

“Me?” I whispered.

“What do you mean?” the masked man asked, outraged. “I summoned you!”

The demon glared at him.

“But you aren’t the one bleeding on my altar, are you?” he asked, his voice turning dangerous. “I answer to those who have something to give.”

He leaned back down, his black tongue tracing the length of my face. Even in my fading state, I couldn’t help but whine at the action. Each touch sent little fires spreading across my skin.

“You are so sweet,” he growled. “I cannot wait to taste you.”

“I can give you anything you want!” the man yelled back.

“You don’t have anything I want,” the demon said. “Now, little sacrifice, what do you want? I could kill them all and hang them up by their feet as they bleed over the town square, or I could paint the cemetery with their intestines. Anything.”

I could only make out his eyes now, the rest of my vision was black, and I could feel myself drifting. The only thing I had a hold on was my sight, everything else was numb, and it felt as though I didn’t even have a body anymore.

“I’m dying,” I choked out.

“I can fix that,” he said, his voice barely above a whisper. The men were yelling, but I only heard his voice. “You just have to give me something in return.”

I wanted to ask what. I wanted to ask the extent of what I was getting myself into, but I couldn’t even hold on to those questions. I could feel myself floating; my eyes began to close.

All I could think about was how happy I would be to finally see Libby again. I had so much to tell her, so much that I didn't say when she was alive.

"Make the deal, human," the demon growled, pulling me away from my daydream. "You have minutes, or else you will die."

Did I even want to live anymore?

"Make a deal with me," he growled again. "Just say yes. Just one word human."

I couldn't hear the words as I said them; I was too far gone. The only thing that I saw was the demon's millions of sharp teeth as he smiled at me.

Chapter 4

Z

I couldn't bring myself to regret answering the summoning even as the girl passed out on the stone altar. I moved quickly, tore open the skin on my wrist with my teeth, and held the bleeding flesh over her stomach. Fresh black blood fell onto her stomach and wormed its way into the wound.

Humans were so weak, especially if they just took one stab to the stomach. I would have to be careful with this one, though I was sure that this arrangement would be over sooner rather than later.

All I was bound to do was save her and take what I wanted, all because she was too ignorant and didn't add anything to the deal. Though she was dying. . . I couldn't fault her for not thinking it through when she had no other choice.

I snapped off the chains that held her delicate wrists and ankles before holding her to my chest. My shadows wrapped around her, protecting their prized possession. I smirked as her body jerked when the tendrils engulfed her. I could feel the spike of fear that radiated out of her even in her deep sleep.

I can't wait to see what she thinks when I finally show her the real me, I thought smugly. She would fear, she would yearn. I would make her beg, make her tremble. Ahhh, it has been far too long since I have enjoyed the company of a human.

I was already getting too excited, and the human men that had called upon me were staring at me with fear though their fear smelled disgusting, rotten. I could tell that they had done this many times

before by the darkness of their souls, but they obviously didn't do their research before contacting me.

I didn't have to kill them. I had done my part, saving her, and anything outside of that was more than what I bargained for. . . but it would also mean that I could keep her longer, and after a millennium of not feeling a human shudder underneath me, I had already planned to keep her for a long time.

"You picked the wrong demon," I said, and with one motion, I sent my shadows to them, making sure to pierce each and every heart. They fell to the ground in a chorus of groans and screams, the whole act made me shudder in pleasure. Humans were playthings and I yearned to hear their pained voices, though the rest would have to wait until I could feast because after so many years of being bound to this tomb, I was hardly a threat.

When I heard the last heartbeat stop, I carried the girl deeper into the crypt. It was cold for a human, but the shadows were perfect for me to hide in while I watched over her, and I doubted anyone would come here for a while. She had called to me unknowingly the other night; that's how I ended up in her dreams. It was a very sweet surprise to be pulled from my slumber, especially by someone as delicious as her.

It was all I could use my shadows for when I was bound and without a deal. I couldn't touch, couldn't talk, just watch. There was rarely a time where the people I visited would be brave enough to make a deal right then and there, though the reaction was the same each time; women and men would go crazy when they felt me enter their dreams. As the years went on, humans forgot about us and I was lowered to nothing but a sweet nightmare, but it didn't make their pleasure any less satisfying.

It was the greatest part about being an incubus, and I reveled in even the little bit of power they gave me. . . but her.

My mouth watered when I watched as she fucked herself. Many would not have the strength to look at me as they did it, but she loved it.

Others would turn, hide themselves as they came, but she was different. She acted like she was on stage; every movement was exaggerated, and when she finally climaxed. . . I found myself entranced.

I knew at that moment that I would have to visit her every single night for as long as she dwelled in this town. She was far too interesting, and the way she made my body swell after her sweet climax filled me was unbelievable. I could last on that one climax alone for months. . . but here she was in the flesh.

Flesh, which was now shaking. A disappointment in the human flooded me, they were always so weak, how would she even be able to handle it when I finally fucked her?

I could take her to her house, I realized. I knew where it was, I knew where everything was in this town after being forced to wander it for years. It had been a long time since I was in the company of a human, and I knew that they were fragile but didn't remember just how needy they were until this moment. Shifting to look at her bloodied face, I noted that the color had drained from it completely.

My blood should be working inside her now, healing every cut and wound on her puny body. I let out a chuckle and called my shadows to me. She would be in for a surprise when she woke up and felt the full effects of my blood in her.

I inhaled deeply and pictured the old house that the girl resided in. In seconds I found myself in the middle of her front hallway. The house's warmth seeped into my old bones, though it was nothing compared to the warmth I craved. I didn't bother bringing her to the room that I had seen her in before. Instead, I threw her onto the couch, her head flopping limply and hanging off the side of the cushion.

I noted the waning fire in the fireplace, and with a flick of my hand, I lit it with dark black flames, the space immediately becoming twice as hot as before. I sighed as it filled me; this was much more reminiscent of my time in the underworld and was much more bearable than the

cold crypt. Sitting down in the farthest chair from the woman, I waited for her to awaken.

She took a while to regain consciousness, but I saw it first in the flush of her skin, then she began sweating. When she started shifting and murmuring in her sleep, I knew she was close to waking.

Incubus blood had funny effects on humans that I had thoroughly loved to explore when the country was still young. Back then, men and women had no idea what to do when their insides started to itch, and their loins started to swell. Blame it on the devil, blame it on the witches, but one thing was certain. . . they could never deny their need to be filled.

And I personally loved to see them begging.

I could feel myself swell at the thought of it. When her eyes fluttered open, they didn't even register that I was there. She was already in her haze, her eyes were glazed over, and her hand started to travel south.

I cleared my throat.

Her wide, dark eyes met mine, and I saw confusion flash across her face.

“What form do you prefer I take?” I asked. I don't know why I wanted to make her comfortable, but it came out of me without a second thought.

I have been away from humans for too long.

“What happened?” she asked but made no move to sit up. Her hand was already trailing itself between her legs, almost as if it had a mind of its own. The slip was sheer, giving me a full view of her pert breasts. I wondered if she had underwear on.

“Male or female?” I asked—stupid question, just do it already.

She let out a sigh when her hand finally slipped between her legs. Her eyes closed, she wasn't even paying attention to me, but I could hear the sound of her fingers working inside her. The act awakened the feral part of me that had been chained for so long. I had to grit my teeth to stop from marching over there right this second.

With a forced sigh, I focused on pulling my shadows back into me; if she did not answer, she would get the male version this time. It was my preferred anyways, so I didn't complain. I shouldn't have even given her a choice.

As I stretched my now-human neck, I could feel the long-unused muscles strain against my movements. The skin felt confining and the muscles, though strong, took a minute to adjust to.

I was interrupted by a gasp.

The sacrifice had her eyes open now and stared at me wide-eyed. Her eyes trailed my naked form and stopped at my erect cock.

"Different from those sad human ones, huh?" I asked and gripped my length in my hand. The shaft, unlike normal human cocks, was ribbed and contained a knot which I squeezed as she watched in fascination. She let out a whine as I ran my hand up the length of my shaft and to the hooked head that was leaking precum. Human cocks were boring, and even I preferred the perfected demon one over them. They were made for all sorts of pleasure, after all.

God those fucking eyes, I groaned internally and applied more pressure to my cock, getting lost in the bursts of pleasure that shot through this human form.

"You want this?" I asked and made a show of pumping my length slowly.

She turned onto her stomach without removing her hand.

“What did you do to me?” she said, and I knew she was scared. I could feel her fear, but the words sounded like beautiful moans from her mouth.

“I saved your life,” I said simply. “And now you must pay me back. It’s our deal.”

At that, she finally pulled her hand from between her legs. Her fingers shined as she gripped onto the couch.

What resilience.

“What do you want?” she asked. Her face was beautifully flushed, and she sent me a glare. God, that face was so perfect for a human. She wanted to show me that she couldn’t be pushed around, but I would prove her wrong in minutes.

“You know what I want,” I said and sent her a wicked grin, showing her my sharp teeth.

Chapter 5

Ruby

The thing in front of me wasn't close to human even as it tried to disguise itself as one.

The shadows were now gone and in their place stood a man with skin that looked almost gray. Where the shadows sunk into his body showed intricate, black swirls that could have been mistaken for tattoos, but with every movement of his hand down his shaft, they twitched, proving to me that they were still alive.

His red eyes were still the same, but now I saw that the whites were pitch black. His full mouth was wider than that of a human, and it held frighteningly sharp teeth. He licked his lips, giving me a view of the same black tongue he had shown me earlier. He had strong cheekbones and messy, black hair that was just begging for me to touch it.

Even as the devil incarnate, he was strikingly handsome, and I couldn't stop imagining the way his teeth would sink into my neck. His cock was just as scary as the rest of him and bigger than any dildo I had owned, though it didn't stop me from imagining it inside of me.

There was an intense heat inside me, and my entire body pulsed with need. I had pulled my hand from between my legs, but now that I had seen him, all I could think about was marching over there and sinking down on his cock.

There were so many things that I wanted to focus on, but I couldn't think of anything else. The drool that had gathered in my mouth

spilled over, and I found myself climbing—no crawling—off the couch to the demon that occupied the loveseat on the other side of the room.

It was a large seat that was meant to fit two people, but he overpowered the entire chair. His legs were wide, giving me an unobstructed view as he lazily pumped his cock; precum was spilling down the side of his head and already I imagined lapping it up with my tongue. He was taller than the head of the chair, and I had a moment of panic when I realized that he would probably tear me in half.

Nonetheless, I found myself in front of his knees without even registering that I had moved. I looked up into his eyes, entranced by them.

“You did this,” I whispered as I leaned up onto my knees and toward his erection. I was positively foaming at the mouth. I felt myself pulling off the sticky white slip but barely registered it; I was too entranced by him.

“I did,” he said in a calm voice. “How long do you think you can hold off, hm?” He leaned forward, and his long tongue brushed the side of my cheek, causing me to shudder. “You are showing remarkable restraint.”

I didn’t feel like I was. I was ready to end it all, ready to take him fully.

“Why do I want this?” I asked, balling my hands against my bare thighs.

I could feel my juices trailing down my legs and onto the rug beneath me. No one, and I mean no one, had ever made my body react in the way this demon had.

“Why wouldn’t you?” he said and leaned back. He pumped himself once, twice, before peaking again. “Tell me how much you want it. It has been a while since I have heard a human beg.”

The words were on the tip of my tongue, but I bit down on them, tasting the metallic liquid that squirted in my mouth as a result. He arched his dark brow toward me.

I hesitantly looked back down at his hand.

Think Ruby, I screamed at myself. Think.

For a split second, I dipped my hand between my thighs again but was interrupted by a loud growl radiating from the demon's chest.

"I told you what I wanted," he hissed. "We made a deal." He bared his teeth at me. A spike of adrenaline ran through me, and I jumped onto my feet, but not to run.

Instead, I took a hesitant step toward him.

"I told you to beg," he said, and his hand shot out to trap my throat. With one movement, he lifted me off the ground and forced me onto his lap. The shadows that were hidden inside him shot out to grip my thighs and part them so that my aching pussy was just mere inches away from his dick.

The height difference between us then became much more real. He still loomed over me as I sat on his lap.

His shadows teased my legs, squeezing tightly, and then moved to play in the wetness coating my thigh. They were like tentacles as they stretched out of his skin and wrapped around various parts of me, though they felt soft and held a warmth to them. One slipped between my legs, and I let out a loud whimper as it rubbed my pulsing clit. His grip on my throat tightened.

"You're so responsive to me," he said. "Why must you fight yourself on this?"

The shadows now circled my hips and pushed me down gently onto the head of his cock; the hand that was still pumping his length helped

push the head from my clit to my entrance and back again in a teasing motion.

I couldn't help the moans that escaped my lips, and his hooded eyes watched all of it, cataloging my reaction.

I was so close to exploding. Every time the head of his cock brushed against my entrance, he paused, pushing it in slightly before pulling it back out again. I wanted to just sink down on it and beg him to finally fuck me.

But something held me back.

“Human, you are testing my patience,” he said and pushed into my cunt. I winced as even just the head stretched me uncomfortably. My hips jerked in response, sinking him in even deeper.

“Oh god,” I moaned and slapped my hands on his warm chest.

I want this so fucking bad, and if this is going to happen, I will do it my way.

I pushed myself down onto him slowly, feeling as the ribbed side of his cock brushed against my walls. When he was but a quarter of the way in, I felt his hooked head brush against the sensitive spot inside me and shuddered. I tried to lift back up, but his shadows held me in place.

His large hand gripped the side of my hips, digging his sharp nails into the tender flesh.

“There is no god here,” he said with a deep, throaty chuckle before slamming me down onto his length, stopping me right before the knot at the base of his cock.

Pain. Blinding pain before I could feel the absolute euphoria of being filled to the brim. My mind began swimming, and I felt a haze cover my entire being, almost as if I was floating.

He removed the hand from my throat only to grip the other side of my hip and force me to ride his cock. He only lifted me a bit at a time, an oddly gentle way of letting me get used to his size.

Until I felt him trying to push himself farther inside me.

“Too big,” I gasped as I felt my walls stretch around him. Tears had already been gathering, but then they were falling freely.

“No such thing,” he grunted. When he finally sheathed himself fully inside of me, he let out a contented sigh. Even without moving, I could feel his cock hit the back of my womb. Looking down between us, I saw the outline of it on my lower stomach.

He gave me little time to rest before he began fucking me.

“Human women are so small,” he grunted his words with each thrust. I threw my head back and let out a cry as he pounded into me. “So warm. So sweet.”

As he spoke, he brought his mouth to mine and slipped his long tongue inside. I let out a groan in response to the odd feeling of his tongue exploring my mouth. It was slimy and was what I imagined a reptile tongue would feel like.

He was jackhammering into me so viciously that I had to throw my hands across his shoulders to steady myself. He let out a husky laugh and stood up without warning. I let out a noise and clung to his frame, but he had other plans and threw me to the cool floor in front of the fireplace. I felt my heart stop when I saw the black flames reaching out of the fireplace, eating the bricks surrounding it.

“Don’t get distracted,” he growled and flipped me over so that my face was pushed to the ground. He pulled my ass up into the air. I turned around to protest, but his large hand forced my head into the ground.

It was horrible, brutal movements that should have scared me. . . but I found myself pushing my bare pussy back toward him and spreading

my legs. I was trembling in anticipation.

Once again, he teased my entrance.

“I bet you’re feeling much more lucid now,” he said with a laugh. He pushed his large cock into me just barely before pulling out. “Tell me, human, where is that fight?”

“Fuck you,” I spit out at him.

He laughed loudly at that and pushed into me with one motion. Again, he did not hold back, and it felt as though he was putting all of his force into each thrust. In this position, I could feel him hit deeper than before, and when I felt his shadows play with my clit I came harder than I ever had in my life.

My vision went white, and the white-hot pleasure curling through my belly spread throughout my entire body. I could hear his own growls of pleasure, and his movements slowed, and each time our skin met, he would grind into me.

Tears leaked from my eyes.

“Please, god, it’s too much,” I protested as his shadows pinched my clit. There was no break between one orgasm and the next; I felt them building up faster than I could comprehend.

“It’s nowhere near enough,” he grunted.

In between our moans, I could hear the drip of my juices hitting the floor, the squelch of him moving inside of me. Each thrust pushing me closer and closer to oblivion.

When I came that time, I could feel him still within me, and his inhumanly hot seed spurted inside me, filling me to the brim then escaping me and falling down my thighs.

When he pulled out of me, I could only fall to the floor, exhausted. He got up, leaving me on the floor. I could hear him going back to the

couch, and I could no longer keep my eyes open.

“One down, human,” he growled. “Seventy-two more to go.”

Chapter 6

Z

The human did not move as she slept, and I had a slight panic that I may have killed her. It wouldn't have been the first time I killed a human during sex, but I would be severely disappointed if our game ended here.

I had no doubt that the offspring of the men I killed would be after me soon, and I intended to enjoy my time out of my cave. If they did not come for me by tomorrow night, I would return to my homeland, but until then, I would sit here and enjoy this warm little human, learn about the changes in the world, and plot my escape.

I didn't feel connected to things, but this town had been my dwelling place for hundreds of years, and I wasn't prepared to face a changing world. I, of course, had seen it when I traveled in my shadow form, but physically I had never been outside of this town, and my shadow form could only go so far, so that left only one choice for me.

"Human," I called after an hour had passed. She did not so much as stir. I sent my shadows to prod at her sides, but still, there was no reaction.

I walked over to her after a few moments and picked her tiny form up. Her eyelids fluttered but did not fully open as her head lolled to the side. My blood should have fully worn off by now, and she would be lucid, but given her reaction to me, I knew that it would take little convincing to get her ready for me.

Huffing, I placed her on the couch and took inventory of the house around us. It was clean, though it had the same characteristics all the

human houses had. I wondered if the human, when she woke up, would need sustenance. I spotted a large metal machine that I knew humans used to hold food.

I had to stop myself when I moved toward it without thinking.

Let the human starve, I thought angrily.

Looking back at her, I noted her small frame and slightly sunken cheeks.

Or. . . maybe if the human proved useful, you could run with her, a voice said in my head. That was the voice that usually gave me stupid ideas but feeling the way her tight cunt squeezed the life out of my cock; I was partial to keeping this one.

“Human,” I growled again. This time she stirred but still remained asleep.

I could send my shadows to her unconsciousness, but I was tired of that. I had that for years. The growl that ripped through my chest caused the windows to shake. I stormed over to the couch, spread her legs, and forced my head into her still-soaked cunt.

Inhaling deeply, I could feel her sweet scent filling my body and causing my cock to throb. I placed a kiss on her clit before pulling it fully into my mouth and giving it a long suck.

She jerked awake then, her hand threaded through my hair, and her body curled inward. I watched as she came to, looking up at her while continuing to suck on her clit in pulsing, hard motions. A loud whine came out of her full lips, and her eyebrows pushed together.

“Oh my god,” she said.

I grabbed her thighs, piercing them with my nails.

“I told you not to fucking call that bastard,” I said. “Z.”

I pulled her clit back into my mouth, sucking harder than before, enraged at her continued slipups. She shook, no words coming out of her open mouth. She was about to come already. So easy, so responsive. Made my entire being pulse with need.

I could feel her confusion, but she was unraveling faster than she could understand, and instead of my name falling from those sinful lips, there came a whine that caused my cock to straighten. Her juice exploded around my mouth, and I couldn't help but unfurl my tongue and lick up every drop. She shuddered in response.

“Oh g— is that your tongue?” she asked, catching herself just before uttering that shit's name. I smiled and decided to reward her by forcing my tongue into her cunt.

She positively screeched. A string of curses flew out of her when I hooked my tongue inside of her, massaging her G-spot. I pulled away before she could get too far lost; after all, this wasn't about her.

“Wait. Wait. Wait,” she rushed out as I crawled up her, ready to impale her. My traitor of a body actually froze. A growl sounded from in my chest. “You're a demon, right?”

I cocked my head.

“No fucking shit,” I growled. “Are all humans this stupid?”

Lining up my cock with her entrance, I pushed into her, slowly, enjoying the way she hugged me.

“I mean, fuck,” she moaned as I pushed fully into her. “What are we doing? You said—”

She was cut off when I gripped her thighs and started to fuck her in earnest. The slap of my balls against her ass and the way she pulsed around me was almost enough for me to come immediately.

“This,” I said and used my shadow to play with her swollen clit, “is sex, dear human.” She arched and tried to pull me to her, but I stayed out of reach and stared as she struggled. “And is repayment for me saving your life.”

She held on to the arm of the couch, steadying her body so that I could pound into her more easily without her slipping down the couch. I let out a chuckle.

When I felt her convulse around me, I decided to let her off easy and come with her. I pulled her close to me, making sure that I could fill her to the brim. I wanted to pull out and force my seed back into her as she struggled, but I clamped down on that feeling and reminded myself that I would be leaving soon.

When her eyes reopened, she glared at me.

“You said it was—”

“Seventy-three,” I said and pulled out of her to go back to the kitchen. I searched that metal box again, growling as I did so. There was almost nothing in there, and I had no idea where to start. She would need sustenance if I wanted to feed more tonight. I would have no problem fucking her until her body gave out, but she, on the other hand. . .

“But I was only—”

“There were seventy-three men in that room, and I killed all of them.” I grabbed some meat and threw it onto the counter in the middle of the kitchen.

“What are you—”

“Humans need sustenance, and if I want you to repay those human lives in twenty-four hours, then—” I was cut off by her slamming the metal door closed. I was met with a disheveled and red-faced human who looked as though she had a small volcano hidden inside her.

“Stop interrupting me!” she growled.

I stood straight up to look down at her tiny form, surprised by her outburst but also positively amused. My eyes drifted down to her naked figure and I could feel my shadows form as my come dripped down her thighs.

“Alright, human,” I said and leaned back on the cold counter behind me. “Speak.”

Her mouth flapped open and shut a few times before she pulled herself together.

“We made a deal for my life,” she said. “Not the lives of others.”

A smile played on my lips.

“Actually,” I said and looked up as if considering her thought, then looked her dead in the eyes and smiled with all my sharp teeth, “we didn’t specify anything of such. So, I have the right to demand repayment of my services.”

She huffed and looked utterly offended at my insinuation.

“And if I don’t want your services?” she asked.

I cocked my head and moved to push her against the fridge. I called my shadows to bring her hands above her head and others to pull her legs apart. She didn’t speak as I bent forward and took her erect nipple into my mouth. She tried to stifle her moan, but I heard it.

She is a special human woman, I decided. I just fucked her harder than anything she has probably ever experienced, and she is still writhing under my touch? Perfection.

I stood up, coming close to her but not touching her with my physical body, and let my shadows do the work. I worked them between her lips from her entrance to her clit. Her face flushed, and she tried to look away, but I grabbed her chin and forced her to look at me.

“It sounds like you really want my services,” I said.

“Is the deal when you come or when I come?” she said.

I froze, shocked at her question.

“Of course when I come,” I growled.

“Change it,” she said, then let out a moan as my shadows entered her, “for when I come.”

I rolled my eyes at her and pulled my shadows away from her completely.

“Why would I do that?” I said. “The game will be over soon if we continue to go at this rate.”

“Exactly,” she said, her eyes shifting to the windows on the other side of the kitchen. “It will take longer for you; we will be here for a long time. And I barely got away from those crazed people with my life last time. I have to escape this fucking town and soon.”

I leaned back to stare at her, removing my hand from her chin. We were on the same page about leaving. It almost surprised me. I expected a weak human like her to be so enamored by my powers that she forgot everything around her.

I wanted to reject it. Wanted to make her repay the debt with my orgasms, but she hadn’t known about my thoughts to keep her, and I planned to keep it that way as long as possible. I saw her swallow and take a deep breath before dropping to her knees.

My cock twitched at her actions, and I willed it to harden once again, another perk of being an incubus. A willing human who was actually seeking me out was a rarity. I decided then that I wouldn’t—couldn’t—let an oddity like her go.

“Show me what that mouth can do, and I will consider,” I said.

Chapter 7

Ruby

My goal was to get him out of here as soon as possible, and then I planned to leave this fucked up town and never look back. It was already five in the morning, and the sun would be coming up soon; my time was running out.

Between the last orgasm and me falling to my knees in front of him, I had only had a few minutes to plan, and this was the best thing that I could think of. Give him what he wants, get him out, and run like hell because there was no way I was getting out of here with a demon watching me all the damn time.

I made sure to keep eye contact with him as I leaned forward and took him in my mouth. With his girth, my mouth could barely fit the entirety of him.

“Is that all you got, little human?” he teased, his wide lips opening to show his pointed teeth.

I pushed forward, taking him until he hit the back of my throat, but even then, he was barely halfway inside me. I used my tongue to trace the ribs on the bottom of his cock before pulling back and sucking on the hooked tip. I used my hands to pump him, hoping this would suffice. The only warning he gave me was a small chuckle before his hand tangled in my hair and forced me to take him deeper.

“Relax, human.”

In response, I grazed his shaft with my teeth, which caused a low groan to come out of his mouth. I did it again while trying to stop myself

from gagging.

“Better,” he said. “But not enough.”

Using his hand as an anchor, he thrust into me, hitting the back of my throat and causing me to gag. He did not stop. Instead, my noises seemed to egg him on, and he continued to fuck my face as his red eyes gleamed down at me. I could tell he was enjoying himself because, even through his snarls, his lips quirked.

I found myself responding to him again, my abused pussy flaring to life, and heat was developing low in my belly. He was animistic, forceful, and everything I had ever dreamed about when I was fantasizing in the dark.

I reached my hand between my legs, but it was snapped away by his shadows. He stopped his thrusts and yanked me up before bending me over the freezing kitchen island.

“The little human has been lying,” he sang, and I felt his fingers glide up my wet slit.

“Nails,” I hissed.

He paused, and then I felt two of his blunt fingers push into me.

“I forgot humans are so fragile,” he said, then curled his fingers inside of me. “That should be better for you.”

Letting out a moan, I tried to position my hips so his fingers could reach deeper, but my feet did not touch the floor, so it was useless.

“I never lied,” I said and gripped the sides of the countertop when I felt him remove his fingers and tease my entrance with his cock.

He tsked and slowly pushed into me. “You said you didn’t want my services.”

“I said if,” I clarified, then turned my head back to him. “I’ve always wanted to be fucked by a monster.”

His eyes widened before a breathtaking smile graced his face. Though I am sure that was the smile most saw in their nightmares, I couldn’t help the shiver of excitement it gave me. The excitement and fear he pulled from me was what I had been missing in my drab city life, and I just knew that I could get addicted to the feeling of him inside me.

“Fucked by a monster?” he asked. “I am going to fucking destroy you, little human.”

His hands gripped the sides of the counter, and he pulled out of me only to slam back into me. Even though we had gone many rounds before this, his cock filling me was still so shocking. My hips bit into the side, and I knew that would leave horrible bruising the day after, but I didn’t care. All I could care about was the way his hips snapped into me and how good the hooked tip of his cock felt dragging against my walls.

It was sex, that’s it. . . but the intensity of him was so overpowering that I felt as though he was working to worm himself into my soul.

“Human men will never be the same for you,” he grunted and pulled on my hair. “You will forever remember the way your pussy clamped down on me and the way I make you scream. I will be there in your darkest nights, and when you touch yourself, you will come to the feeling of my cock ripping you open.”

I fucking believe it, I thought. Nothing would compare, nothing could. This was inhuman and a once in a lifetime chance. It was wrong in every sense. I should be trying to run and trying to figure out what the fuck just happened to my life, but I couldn’t get over how good it felt to be consumed by him.

“Yes,” I moaned. “Harder, please.”

He let out a laugh before obliging. A thought flashed through my mind that maybe we would upend this island, but I knew it would be worth it.

A knocking on my door called me away from our moment. He did not stop pounding into me, but my mind went on high alert.

“It’s not them,” he growled, his hand coming to circle my clit. “It is a female.”

“I need to—”

“You need to pay attention to me,” he growled. “You think I waited hundreds of years to escape and not have my sacrifice pay attention as I fuck her?”

A low whine escaped my throat as I felt my orgasm explode inside of me without warning. He upped the pressure on my clit before rocking us, drawing out my orgasm.

“Jesus Christ,” I cursed and gasped. He would ruin me for any other human.

“Z,” he growled and nipped at my neck after he pulled me off the counter to his chest. “Call me Z, human.”

“Call me Ruby, not human,” I replied with just as much venom.

The pounding at the door became louder.

“Ruby,” he said with a huff. “The name of a whore in my time.”

I decided not to respond to the jab.

“Let me go check,” I said just as I heard Anne calling my name.

He paused for a moment before pulling out of me and dropping me to the floor. I stumbled toward the laundry room and grabbed a hoodie and leggings, calling to Anne as I approached.

When I opened the door, I was met with Anne's sickly, pale face. Her eyes were wide, and they trailed my body. I wanted to ask why she was even up at five in the morning, but she found her words before I could find mine.

"You're alive," she whispered. She shot a look over her shoulder before diving toward me, her frail hands grasping at my hoodie. "Leave. Leave now. They will be coming soon!"

I tried to regain composure. I still felt weak from the almost attempt on my life.

"They already came." Z's deep voice came from behind me.

Anne's face paled when she saw the creature residing in the shadows of the hallway. Looking toward him, my face flamed when I realized that he was still naked and erect. It was all too obvious what was happening here.

"You?" she whispered, horrified, and backed away.

"I see the boy came to you after all," he mused, his eyes trailing to her swollen belly. "I guess he did just need a bit of convincing."

"It was you they called on?" she asked. "I thought they wou—"

"You thought wrong, human," he said and came to wrap his arm around my shoulder. I didn't know why my first instinct was not to shrug him off but to lean into his warmth. The air coming from outside chilled me, but the heat radiating off the demon's body seemed to envelop me.

It felt safe.

"You made a deal with a demon?" she asked me, her eyebrows raising into her hairline.

"It seems like you did as well," I mused. "Though your deal seems a bit different than mine."

I was not stupid; I knew that much. I could piece together what happened, and for some reason, I was discomforted when I thought of Z pounding into another like he had just done to me.

“She liked a boy; he didn’t like her,” Z explained. “So, I visited his dreams as her and gave him a show.”

Anne’s face flushed, and she looked down at the floor boards. So that counted as a deal too. . .

I was oddly relieved at the news.

“So, you can do stuff in dreams,” I mused. “What do you get out of it?”

He gave me a smile that caused me to shudder.

“Don’t you understand by now?” he whispered, and his shadows slipped into my sweatshirt. “I’m an incubus; I feed off of sex.”

“Regardless,” Anne said, calling us back to her. “You both need to get out of here. If they know you have escaped with their beloved demon, then they will come after you.”

“They are dead,” Z said to her. “Though I don’t plan to stay longer than another day.”

Me neither, I thought. I planned to get my shit in between whatever it was we were doing, and I was out of here as soon as I could. I could feel tiredness weighing on me. Between the kidnapping and the constant need from Z, I had little time to rest.

“The ones who partake in the ritual are not the only ones,” she said, unfazed that her townspeople were murdered.

Her words bothered me but apparently not Z. His shadows wrapped around her and forced her outside.

“Leave us,” he commanded. “I will be out of here before they can rally enough people to bring me down.”

His shadows slammed the door shut, and without hesitation, he took me in his arms and ripped my sweatshirt off.

“Don’t you ever leave me wanting, human.” His voice had a dangerous edge to it.

“It’s Ruby,” I hissed as his tongue ran up the length of my neck.

“Ruby,” he said with venom.

Chapter 8

Z

Humans were so annoying as they slept. Sleep was when I thrived when I was locked up, but seeing Ruby sleep after so many years of being locked in a prison made me remember just how stupid those frail human bodies were.

I wanted to shake her awake. Yell at her. Wake her up with my cock buried deep inside her pussy. My eyes trailed to her firm ass. . . or that too.

I wanted to yell at her for wasting so much of our time. If I was being honest, I could have left after our third round. My power was overflowing, and I was not sure that my body needed, or could handle, much more than it already took.

A deal is a deal, I thought, betraying the rationality I had tried to stick to. I was being selfish and overindulgent because the human had piqued my interest.

The sun was already almost fully up, and the human had yet to stir. This was the last day we would have together, and I wasn't ready to give up the only human I'd had in years. Especially one that was as responsive as she was.

I stalked to the kitchen, cursing under my breath, and pulled open the steel door of the refrigerator, and pulled out some of that packaged, sliced meat. When I walked back to her room, a fire burned inside me when she was still asleep.

“Such a wasteful human,” I grumbled. “Doesn't know the first things about deal-making.”

Taking the packaged meat, I threw it at her form under the blankets; it landed with a crack. She let out a groan and turned toward me. When she saw the mess of the meat, her dark eyes lit with fire.

“What the fu—”

“You are wasting my time, human!” I growled and lunged forward to grab ahold of her ankle. She let out a yelp as I pulled her to me and threw away the blanket.

“Z!” she squealed and turned to glare at me. “I have a life, you know!”

“You can have a life after you fulfill your contract,” I growled. I grabbed a handful of the meat and forced it into her face. “Eat your sustenance, human.”

She sputtered and slapped away my hand.

“I’ll fulfill my duties but not like this!” she yelled. “I have to get out of here too, you know!”

I paused and stood up straight, looking at the way her dark eyes widened. She still thought that I would let her leave after everything. My mind ran through the various scenarios of telling her I was staking a claim on her.

She seemed like a human who—while willing to be fucked by a monster—would not want to be controlled by one. She would probably have to be dragged out kicking and screaming from this house in order to get her to follow me.

I would agree to help her, only assuming that by the time she realized I was taking her, she would be too late. I had big plans for her back in my homeland and could not wait for a chance to have her all to myself, for good.

“What do you require?” I asked.

She sat up fully and cleared her throat. Her eyes shifted around the room as if just now coming up with her plan.

“I have to pack,” she said. “And load the car, then leave whenever you do.”

I nodded. “You will get an hour to finish your tasks, then I expect you to fulfill your duties.”

“That’s not enough time,” she said hurriedly. “Unless. . .”

“Spit it out, human,” I growled in frustration.

She looked down, her cheeks flushing.

“Unless I have a super strong demon to help me move everything.” She looked up at me under her eyelashes, and I felt my shadows constrict on my skin. The once slow-beating heart that resided in this human skin began to beat fast.

I cleared my throat, suddenly finding it constricted.

“I am strong,” I said and crossed my arms over my chest.

She gave me a wide smile, and her eyes lit up. “I know you are,” she purred. “But first things first, you have to put some clothes on.”

Frowning, I looked down at my naked body. It looked pretty good. I was unsure why this human wanted me to cover it up so badly. Shrugging, I commanded my shadows to cover my body in a similar fashion to what I had seen the human males sleep in, baggy pants and a tank top.

She let out a satisfied noise then stood to slap her hand on my arm. “You can start with cleaning up the mess you made on the bed.”



* * *

Packing with the human was. . . bearable. With my shadows, I could gather all of her belongings easily and place them in big plastic bins. She had been directing me, and for the moment, I allowed it. It had been too long since I had interacted with a human for anything other than feeding or bonding and to see her navigate the space was. . . interesting, to say the least.

She was in a hurry, but I noticed that she made sure her belongings were placed carefully in the bins instead of haphazardly thrown, as I had tried to do many times. She even had the gall to scold me like a fledgling.

I had watched with interest as her eyes lingered on certain items. She would stare at them for minutes with a frown on her face before realizing what she was doing, and then she would hurry to hide them.

The hour came and went, but I couldn't bring myself to call it out. I could feel the worry radiating off of her, and a part of me just wanted to see what she looked like when she was happy. Truly happy. . . and if this is the way to do it, then so be it.

When she finally did get sustenance, I watched in fascination as she pulled together the food with precision. She had more of that packaged meat, cheese, and a variety of sauces and green vegetables that she piled between bread. I had seen this before many years ago, but the world has changed.

"Do you want some?" she asked once she noticed me staring.

"I do not eat this type of food, hu—Ruby," I said. "Your body is all I require."

She rolled her eyes and bit into her meal. Her stomach had been yelling at her to get food for hours now, and finally, she gave in.

"Where will you go after this?" she asked. "I mean do you have a home?"

I wanted to correct her, but I bit my tongue.

"I will go back to the underworld," I said truthfully. "I have not been back in centuries due to my imprisonment, and it will be the safest place for me while I recuperate." I paused a moment. "And you? Is there family waiting for you?"

"No family," she admitted. "My sister died a few months ago, and now it's just me."

I nodded. Demons like myself were mostly alone, though there were some families in the underworld. I had watched them with envy growing up but grew out of it as I aged.

“I also do not have a family waiting for me,” I supplied unnecessarily. Her eyes widened before looking at the counter. There was an understanding between us that seemed to go beyond our words.

“So, there is an underworld,” she mused. “Is there also a heaven?”

I gave her a look, and she shook her head.

“The underworld is more exciting,” I said. “More freeing.”

“I bet,” she said with a huff. A small fire lit inside me.

“Do you doubt my homeland?” I asked. Her fear permeated the air.

“No, it’s just,” she floundered for words. “That’s where all the bad people are, right?”

A growl made its way up my throat.

“I don’t expect a puny human to understand the intricacies of the underworld,” I spat.

She shifted uncomfortably and stuffed the last of her food into her mouth. She was stalling; I could feel it.

Spit it out, human, I thought angrily.

“You know we probably won’t finish the deal, right?” she asked. Her eyes hesitantly looked toward mine. “What will happen then?”

I stood up straight, the edges of my lips pulling into a smile. Walking toward her, I pulled my shadows out and wrapped them around her limbs, forcing her to stay put while I invaded her space. I made a show of inhaling her scent in the crook of her neck, it was so sweet smelling, and I couldn’t get enough of it. I wanted to bathe in her scent, cover myself in it so I would never go a day without it. I dragged my tongue from her collarbone to her ear and let out a breathy chuckle.

The way she shuddered caused my body to respond almost immediately. My cock stiffened against my pants, ready to take her again; I pushed it against her.

“Then I will just have to take you with me,” I said and took my middle and ring finger, making sure my nails were blunt, and slid them into my mouth, licking and sucking them until they were covered with spit.

She watched me the entire time with questioning yet hungry eyes.

I slipped my hand into her pants and used the two wet fingers to tease her cunt. She let out a sigh and tried to move her arms, but I had them pinned with my shadows.

“Z,” she moaned as I pushed her clit.

“How would you like this for all eternity, Ruby?” I asked and left a teasing kiss on her lips.

When I nipped at her bottom lip, her mouth opened for me.

Too easy, I thought smugly.

“Sounds like you’re trying to steal my soul,” she said.

I paused and pulled back to stare at her. “That’s not what I deal in,” I said honestly. I didn’t break her stare as I pushed my two fingers inside of her cunt. She was already trembling like a leaf. “Come on; you know you won’t be able to go back to humans after this.” I sucked her lower lip into my mouth and bit on it hard enough to draw blood. “You’re insatiable. Even now, you’re just begging to be fucked.”

Chapter 9

Ruby

There was no way I would let a fucking demon convince me to go to the underworld with him.

I have a life. . . well had a life when my sister was still alive. After this, I would be forced out of the place I put all my savings into and have to go to some shitty hotel while I found another place to live.

“You’re right about one thing,” I said in a low voice and tried to arch into him while his shadows still held me captive. “You should just fuck me again so we can be on our way out of here.”

He let out a growl. “You really think you’re smart, huh?” he asked. Then I saw a dangerous glint pass over his eyes. His hands trailed past my pussy lips and to my puckered hole, dragging the wetness along with him.

I froze against him.

“Has a human boy ever been there before?”

“You can’t expect with your siz—”

“Oh, I can expect a lot, little sacrifice,” he said, the anger now falling away completely from his tone and instead replaced with a purr. “Let me show you how good it can feel. A little sneak peek of what you could have if you follow me to the underworld.”

I swallowed hard and searched the hard lines of his face. His red eyes burrowed into me, and I felt my resolve weaken as he began to

massage the tight hole.

“Take half the deal with you,” I bargained.

His smile dropped but was quickly replaced with a smirk. “Anything else human?” he asked.

My stomach clenched, and my mouth went dry when a thought so beautiful popped into my mind that I actually had to suppress a moan.

“Actually, I have a request,” I said, squaring my shoulders. I swallowed my groan when his fingers found my clit once more.

“Yes, Ruby?” The way he said my name caused a warmth to explode inside me.

“You can. . . change gender?” I asked, remembering the conversation we had with Anne.

His brow cocked, and he pulled back to get a better look at me. His eyes searched my face for something I could not understand.

“You like women,” he said with mock astonishment.

I felt myself flush against him.

“How did I not see it before?” He let out a chuckle. “Yes, my sexual organs and appearance can change at will. My kind doesn’t care much for labels and are mostly genderless as we roam about, but we have adapted for our human companions.”

I nodded, trying to take in this information. I have never been very active with males. I have only had a few boyfriends and hookups here and there, so most of my experience came from the women I dated. There were some lasting ones, but shortly before my sister died, I cut ties with the last of my romantic interests and never looked back.

It was better that way; after all, I had planned to come here never to be bothered again.

. . . and look how that turned out for me.

“I would like to try that form,” I said, mouth already watering at the thought of seeing him change. He was beautifully dangerous in his male form, and I knew his female form would be just as gripping.

“So, you’ll let me fuck your ass and in return you want half the deal gone and a chance with my female organs,” he mused. He let out a low hum. “That seems a bit unfair, doesn’t it?”

“I never said what I would do when you are in your female form,” I said and batted my eyelashes at him. I didn’t want to bring up that I wouldn’t be able to complete the deal again.

I wanted out of here, and time was running out.

Without warning, I felt the familiar softness of his shadows playing with my wet cunt before going farther to nudge against my puckered opening. Using the wetness that had accumulated, they easily slipped through, and I let out a small whine as I felt myself stretch lightly.

“We need lube,” I said hurriedly as I felt the first prick of pain as his shadows invaded me. His shadows constricted on his skin. “I have some upstairs.”

With a puff, the space before me was empty, and the shadows disappeared.

This is my chance, I thought and ran toward the front door, grabbing my keys off the side table. My heart was beating rapidly, and the air felt like it was stuck in my chest.

Just a bit farther. Keep going, I begged myself. The door was but a few strides away and closing in quickly.

I didn’t know what I would do after this, but I knew that he would never let me go. I could feel it in the way he watched over me, in the

way he looked at me as if he was going to devour me, and then when he mentioned the underworld. . . That was bad news.

No matter what, I at least had to try to leave this place because whatever awaited me with this demon. . . it had to be worse than this.

There was a feeling of hope that burned so hot inside of me I thought I might explode. The door, just a few feet away, seemed to loom over me. Then, when the metal doorknob was just inches from my fingertips. . . I was jerked back violently, and my face was pushed to the ground.

I let out a pained groan when I felt Z's hand push me farther into the cold floor. His body was pressed on top of mine, freezing me in this spot. I found it hard to breathe as his weight overpowered mine.

I heard him suck his teeth above me.

"I should have known a human like you was too feisty to have gone quietly," he growled. "I guess I'll just have to take you kicking and screaming." His weight left me, but in its place, his shadows held my upper half down, and his hand pulled my ass up into the air. "Though I doubt you will have much strength after this."

His rough movements and threats shouldn't make my body feel the way it did. They shouldn't make my belly flush with warmth and an ache start between my thighs. I shouldn't have enjoyed it when he threw me to the ground. . . but I did.

I loved every sick moment of it and even arched as he pulled my leggings down, waiting for him to fuck me mercilessly. I found myself panting and squirming as his fingers dipped into my pussy.

He was deliberate with his movements and not at all as rough as I needed. He would trail my lips, tease my entrance, but never touched my clit. I felt the tension building up in me unbearably by just a simple teasing movement. Letting out a strangled moan, I tried to push back into his fingers when he teased my entrance again, but his firm hand on my hip stopped me.

“Please,” I begged, arching my back.

“Now you finally beg?” he asked and let out a sigh. His fingers trailed from my entrance to my ass before he pushed against the barrier. I let out a whine at the feeling of intrusion. He paused, letting me get used to the size before pumping slowly inside me. “You won’t be getting any until I am satisfied with you. Not until I empty every last drop of come into this tight, little ass of yours.”

He pulled out his fingers before squirting the warm lube onto me. I felt it leaking down me and onto the floor. He then pushed two more fingers in and began fucking me with his hand at a pace that caused my hole to burn. He would pound into me, then use a slow scissoring motion of his fingers to pry me open even farther.

“It hurts,” I whined, but despite the pain, I found myself pushing back into his thrusts. It only took a few moments for me to get used to the feeling of him inside me, and the pain mixed deliciously with my own arousal.

I wanted so badly to touch my clit; I was so close to orgasming. It would be over with just a few movements.

“Seems like you like a little pain,” he said and removed his fingers only for the head of his cock to push against the ring of flesh.

More lube was being poured onto his cock and dripped onto me before he slowly pushed himself into me. A scream was stuck in my throat, and I clawed at the floor. His chuckle echoed through the house.

“Please touch me, Z,” I begged, tears flowing over.

“I am touching you, Ruby,” he cooed, then pulled out before thrusting back into me. “Spread your legs a bit wider for me, human.”

I did as he said and felt him sink farther inside me.

“Oh god,” I moaned when I felt myself stretch around him. I wanted to hate it, but I could not. Instead, I found myself wriggling on his cock, begging him to move.

He took my hips and slammed me down the rest of his cock, stopping just shy of his knot. I could feel everything. I could feel the ridges as my insides squeezed against him and the way his hooked cock dragged inside of me.

“What. Did. I. Say?” he grunted with each thrust before fucking me into the floor.

I felt my cunt pulse, and I knew that I was on the brink of an orgasm.

“I’m sorry!” I cried. “Z, please let me come.”

He let out another laugh as he slammed into me from behind. His thrusts were becoming rough, and his movements frenzied. If I knew him better, I would say that this game may have been just as enjoyable to him as it was to me.

“No,” he growled, and with two more thrusts, I could feel his hot seed spurt inside of me. “You have to work for it.”

Chapter 10

Ruby

And work I did.

Escape, the town, even my own needs seemed to disappear in the background as I focused solely on the demon in front of me. He was adamant about not letting me come until I had proven myself to him; proven that I deserved it.

It became all that I could think of. I was so wrought with desire that the entire world seemed to fall away.

He lay on the couch looking at me through hooded eyes. He smirked, and right before my eyes, his entire body started to change. Instead of the strong, broad chest, he now had large perky breasts that rose and fell with his labored breathing. His torso cinched, and his hips—or I guess hers—widened. Those strong legs slimmed, and last but not least, the cock that had been hellbent on destroying my body turned into a perfectly shaped and already wet pussy.

Her face had changed only slightly; it was rounder, and her lips plumper, though those eyes stayed the same, reminding me of the demon I was dealing with. This was even more breathtaking than I imagined, and I couldn't believe the position I was in.

An uncomfortable heat flared inside me as she widened her legs for me. My mouth watered, and without being told, I dove forward to taste the glistening wetness that waited for me.

I moaned when the sweetness of her hit my tongue. It was addicting and far sweeter than any human I had tasted before this. I took my

time licking up her slit before latching my mouth onto her clit and sucking on it. I stared up at the demon to see her watching me with a slightly open mouth with heavy gasps that came from those plump lips.

The first feminine moan that I heard from her lips was enough to send me into a frenzy.

I continued to suck on her clit while I pushed two fingers into her. Her hands wound in my hair, encouraging me to continue. Her hips were bucking widely, and I could feel her clench around me. When she shuddered against me, I was filled with pride.

The same demon that had made me feel as though I was sex-crazed was the one lying before me, panting like she was in heat. A smile spread to my face, and I bit down on her clit.

She arched and screamed in response. I could feel her release spray over me, but I was far from done.

I lifted myself while still pumping my fingers inside of her. I held her gaze, those red eyes glaring at me as if angry. I made a show of licking my lips.

“Such a good little demon,” I cooed and used my thumb to flick her clit once more. “So responsive.”

She growled at me but did not fight me.

“Let’s go for one more.”

Diving back in, I worked hard to push her over into another climax and was rewarded with her loud moan. Before I could react, she sat up and tackled me back into the couch. She positioned herself over me and slipped three fingers into me without warning.

“Finally,” I moaned and bucked against her movements. I threaded my fingers in her hair and brought her snarling mouth to mine. Being mindful of her sharp teeth, I explored her mouth with my tongue.

I could feel her body change in my grasp, but I did not pull away even as I felt the fingers remove themselves, and a cock was placed at my entrance.

When I opened my eyes again, I saw Z staring back at me. He pulled us into a sitting position and lowered me down onto his erect cock. He slid into me so perfectly that I let out a sigh of relief.

His arms wrapped around me, and he pulled me as close as I could get to him. Keeping my arms over his shoulders, I rocked on his cock in slow yet purposeful movements. There was something simmering between us. It had been there since the moment I saw him in my dreams, but it was far too obvious now in this position.

It was intimate, the way our gazes locked and our bodies responded to each other. Every breath he took, I could feel it as though it was taken from my own lungs. Every rock of my hips felt like I was sinking further and further into his being. We were no longer two separate entities, but I felt us intertwine so deeply that there would be no separating us.

When his clawed hands threaded through my hair, I expected him to pull on it, breaking the spell, but instead, he gently pulled me forward and his lips connected with mine.

I was coming fast, but with us like this, it wasn't as explosive as the others. Instead, I was rolled into an orgasm that rocked my entire being. At that moment, I couldn't pull away from him and had to hang on for dear life as the orgasm ripped through me.

He froze beneath me and let out a breathy moan.

"For decades," he whispered, "I have been waiting for a human as perfect as you." He thrust up into me. "You were made for me, every type of me." He pulled away to run his tongue up the length of my neck. "I could feast on this body for decades and still be starving, but never again will I look for another."

“Z,” I cried as his thrusts picked up.

“You have ruined this for me,” he growled.

“As you have for me,” I said and met his thrusts with my own.

Z held on until we came together in a flurry of moans and sweaty skin. When it was finally over, he did not let go of me. Instead, for the first time, he held me.

I refused to break what was going on between us.

I do not know when I had stopped looking at him like the monster he was, but now all I could see was the person who had been trapped for decades; the person who had never once been able to lean on another and was forced to roam this world alone, just as I was now forced to.

“It is time,” he said. “I can sense them stirring in my tomb.”

“Z, I—”

“I will accompany you out of the town,” he said. “And then I will go back to the cemetery where I will depart from this world.”

My mind stalled.

He was saying that he would let me go. He wasn’t going to take me with him. I was free to leave this place. Free to leave him.

“Okay,” I whispered, unable to look into his eyes.

This was a good thing. . . so why did it feel so wrong? Why did it feel as though there was an unmovable weight in my chest?

We parted, then got ready in silence. I made sure to shower, but I was unhappy that his scent would not follow me. This all felt like a fever dream, and I was scared that when I really did leave. . . that I would have nothing to remember this by.

When we had loaded the last of the boxes into my car, he pulled me aside, his hands on my shoulders.

“They will try to follow you,” he said. “So, you need to run—fast—then change a vehicle.” I nodded. His shadows moved around us and started gathering on my skin. They wove together to create a type of black cloak with a hood. “Wear this at all times. Humans tend to avert their eyes from my shadows.”

Shit. I swallowed the knot in my throat and settled with another nod. We both got into the car, and as I pulled out of the driveway, I sent my goodbyes to the house that forever changed my life.

Halloween was in full swing. Children ran down the street laughing as they swung their buckets full of candy, their parents laughing with them. None of them knew what was really happening. No one knew just how dark the cult that resided in the town was.

It was almost painful to watch life go on as normal, knowing full well that if not for Z, I would be dead on that altar right now.

We remained in awkward silence as I navigated the suddenly packed town. A heavy feeling was following me closely as I neared the edge of town. I knew that I would have to part ways with him, but suddenly it didn’t feel real, and I had no idea how I would even begin to separate myself from him. He was in my life for less than twenty-four hours, but suddenly, he had become the defining moment in my entire existence.

We drove in silence until we reached the Welcome sign. I stopped the car and finally looked toward him to see that he was already looking at me. The feel of his body against mine was still seared into me, and I was grateful because he would be nothing more than a memory in moments.

“Keep driving,” he said, his red eyes searching my face. “Remember what I said.”

I nodded.

I saw his shadows gather around him.

**“You’ll find me, right?” I said quickly. He paused, his brow cocking.
“For the deal, I mean. I still owe you.”**

**There was a pause between us, and a part of me wanted to ask him to
take me. . . but I held back.**

“Consider it paid, human,” he said, then in a puff, he was gone.

**It took me a moment to gather myself, but I powered forward with a
heavy heart once I did.**

Chapter 11

Z

Since when did I become a good demon?

I should have stolen her. I shouldn't have let those eyes get to me. But no, I had to go and give away the only human that I had been with in my existence that made me feel like something more than a sex machine.

I had heard about demons falling for their sacrifices before. It was common to see them roaming around the underworld. Hell, I had even seen some of them bear offspring. . . but I always thought it was out of reach for me, nor have I had any desire to keep a human for myself.

I knew I would keep her for sex as it was in my nature. . . but I found myself wanting more. I found myself thinking of how to introduce her to the demons that waited for me back home. I thought about which part of the underworld would be most comfortable for her because my rock of a den would not.

But no, I had to let her go. I had to give her a chance at a normal human life.

I kicked over a rotting gravestone in anger.

I had come to the cemetery to find the opening to the underworld. It was not that easy to gain access, even for a demon like myself. I had wished that my shadows could extend as far as the underworld, but I would be forced to find an opening and do this the hard way.

I had felt one near my own prison but would still have to poke around until I could find it. Luckily the sun was leaving, and the darkness was setting in. My shadows would be able to conceal me from the crazed men who were hunting me, but I would still have to work fast. I was a demon and full on the power that Ruby had given me, so I could take them, but would still have to be careful. The humans who knew about demons grew crafty and knew our weaknesses, sometimes better than we did.

That's how I got caught in the first place.

I weaved through the trees surrounding the graveyard. The graveyard itself had a power radiating from it that caused my shadows to constrict around me. I had long since changed back into my true form, but this place sat wrong with me.

When I rounded the corner toward my old imprisonment, I saw what was radiating that power. There, standing right outside my old home, was a small girl, no older than ten years old. She had the clothes of someone from the time when this country was first founded, and her hair was in a ponytail that fell loosely down her back.

The most disturbing thing was not that she was transparent. . . it was that half her face had been destroyed before her death and was now just a mutilated chunk of flesh that hung loosely off her face.

"Nice to see a fellow wanderer," I said, stepping out of the shadows of the woods.

She turned toward me, her one eye sizing me up. I had never seen her before, but now that I was closer, I knew that I had felt her while I was locked up. Her aura overtook the entire area, leaving a sticky-like film on the skin. It intertwined with my shadows and weighed them down.

She was not someone I would want to fight.

"A demon," she said, and then her head tilted back, and she sniffed the air. "Incubus, to be exact."

“Correct,” I said, then took another step forward. “I am looking for the portal to my home.”

She cocked her head, then gave me her attempt at a smile.

“I will lead you,” she said. “Wouldn’t want to run into that pesky cult and be forced underground for another century.”

I let out a laugh. “How very generous of you,” I said and followed her as she floated through the graveyard.

She led me across the way to a tomb that was three times the size of mine; though I could not feel any power radiating from it, I could feel. . . something.

“The human,” the little girl trailed off. “Does she live?”

I looked down at her form. She was a little less disgusting to look at if you focused on the half of her face that was still intact.

“She lives,” I said, trying to keep the edge from my voice.

“I hope that you did not hurt her,” she said, her eye narrowing at me. “I like that one.”

“I didn’t know you knew her,” I mused.

“She left flowers at my resting place,” she said. “Though there was no marker, she still found me.”

I nodded. That sounded like the little human to do so. I wouldn’t put it past Ruby to be the kinder breed of humans that actually cared for the dead. I had seen how she caressed some of the objects we had moved into the boxes while packing.

Sometimes she would stare at them for longer than necessary, and even though I told myself not to care, I was entranced by the feelings that she gave off when looking so sadly at some of the stuff.

“I did not hurt her,” I said, then looked back to the tomb. “I let her go; she has already left this town.”

The little girl let out a sigh. “Maybe she will come back to play,” she said hopefully.

I sincerely hope not, I thought.

Just as I was about to step forward to the tomb, I heard a whooshing noise from behind me. Tilting, I just barely missed a bullet that was aimed right at me. It grazed me before burying itself in the tomb wall. I hissed, and my shadows went to work trying to heal the wound, but it was no use.

I could feel the burn of holy water attacking the cells of my being.

Turning back, I was assaulted with the sight of the cult members gathered before me. They were swaddled in their dull robes and masks once more, but this time, while there were fewer people, they were armed and ready to take on a demon like me.

Their version of an army, I realized. It was a pitiful army filled with humans far too young, and with hands so shaky they couldn’t shoot straight even if I was right in front of them.

But it was still a risk.

I let out a sigh.

“Go, demon,” the child said, and she let out a giggle that made my shadows recoil. “I will have fun with these ones.”

In a flash, she was gone. She then reappeared before the man that shot me. He let out a scream and flew backward. He went through the others who let go of their guns to catch him.

A few more shots at me, but I was able to maneuver around them while forcing the door to the tomb open. It was a short walk down crumbling stairs before I felt the pull in my chest.

It ignited the ravenous feeling inside, and no matter how much I wanted to go back and take Ruby for myself, I knew that I could not run away from my home. It was calling me, letting me know what I had been missing up here in this drab world.

With a heavy feeling in my stomach, I walked toward the back of the tomb, feeling the tendrils of power calling out to me once more. I inhaled deeply, feeling it invade my body. A warmth that had been so impossible to recreate in the human world filled me as I walked closer.

Even among the darkness and the cracked walls, it started to feel like home.

When I heard a shuffle, I didn't think much of it until a groan followed it. The groan was so familiar that it made me pause.

I didn't see them at first. I was too drunk on the idea of getting back to my homeland. But there, in the corner of the dark room, was a masked man and the human that had been running rampant in my thoughts since I had left her.

Ruby.

She was gagged and tied up. The man behind her was forcing her toward me, cursing at her under his breath.

I shifted my eyes just for a second to scope the place for the opening, but I could not see anything that indicated that it was near. It had to be in another room, but I knew that it was close by the pulsating power in the air, and it had sensed one of its own coming home.

"I have come to make a sacrifice," the man growled and put a knife to Ruby's neck.

The act stirred something in me. I became blindly furious, but my body refused to move. I could only watch as he dragged her to a standing position and teased me with the knife against her throat.

I had thought of doing that to her myself, covering myself in her blood and watching her beg for release as I fucked her. . . but this made me feel off. It made the rock in my stomach grow ten times larger.

“I told your friends that that’s not how a demon like myself works,” I said. “And I have already used her; I have no need for her any longer.”

Her eyes widened in the darkness.

I could kill him right now for even daring to put his hands on her. . . but my shadows quivered at the thought of killing him while Ruby was so close to him. What if I killed her by accident?

I took a step toward them, which only caused the coward of a man to push the blade closer to her throat. This time, he drew blood, and I watched as it beaded and fell down her neck, leaving a stain on her skin.

“I don’t believe that demon,” he hissed. “If that’s true, why was she calling your name in the darkness? Why was she wearing your mark?”

My mark? I only now noticed that the cloak that I had given her for protection was no longer on her body. It angered me almost as much as the knowledge of her coming after me did.

“Sacrifices can get attached,” I said in a voice devoid of emotion. I didn’t look at her as I spoke.

Stupid. Stupid human.

We had shared but twenty-four hours together, and she ran after me the first chance she got? I thought she would be happy to get away. She had practically begged me to let her go and then came running back? What was her issue?

She had no value for her own life and didn’t mind if she too became a ghost set to wander the night forever.

As if I had called her, the little girl from above appeared by the man's side.

“Why did you hurt my friend?” she asked, her voice echoing through the tomb. The sheer power of the girl was replacing the warmth that the portal had caused. It chased away all of the heat and plunged the room into a freeze so cold that I could see the huffs of breath coming out of Ruby's mouth.

I let a smile spread across my face.

I like this little girl.

Chapter 12

Ruby

I had seen wisps of ghosts throughout my lifetime and even a few times around this town. . . but to actually hear and see one standing before my eyes was almost too much to handle.

Dark spots bloomed in front of my eyes, and I fell to the ground beside the masked man as he screamed and jumped away from the girl. I was still bound and gagged, so I had no choice but to look straight at her, and my heart was overcome with sadness when I saw how mutilated her face was.

It was even worse when I saw that the other half of her face resembled Libby so strongly. Tears welled in my eyes. She leaned down, and I felt the tips of her small fingers against the gag before she pulled it down.

“Thank you,” I whispered to her, amazed that she could even touch objects in the physical world.

“Thank you for the flowers,” she said in a sweet voice.

My gaze was torn from hers when I heard the masked man groan. Z, the demon that I had come back for, was there, with his clawed fist through the man’s chest. I could make out in the darkness the blood that dripped from Z’s shadow-cloaked hand, and when his eyes met mine, I felt my heart sink into the cold ground below.

“Why did you come back?” he asked, his growl filling the dead space.

For you, I wanted to say.

I was twenty minutes away by the time I realized that I didn't want him to leave without a goodbye, and I was halfway back when I realized that there was nothing else in this world for me. That was when I understood that what he was offering in the underworld was better than being on the run from those psychos for the rest of my life.

"I have nothing to go back to," I said honestly. "Everyone I loved is dead, and you are the only one to show me any semblance of—"

"Do not mistake anything I did for kindness, human," he spat. "I lived on what we did. You were just one of many meals I needed to survive in this world."

His words felt like they were carved into me with a knife.

"You said you would—"

"It was a lie," he said. "I just wanted to see how far a whore like you would go if given a chance."

The tears spilled over, and I watched in silent pain as he threw away the body in disgust.

But that can't be true, right? I thought. What I felt that last time together was real. A real connection.

"Don't be mean," the ghost child said and worked on my ropes. "You have a soft spot for her, and you know it."

Z looked at the child, then me, before turning his back on us and walking across the room.

"Wait!" I called. He paused and turned to look over his shoulder at me. I had so many things I wanted to say, but they all got stuck in my throat, and I was only left with, "Take care of yourself."

He scoffed and walked away but not before uttering, "Try not to get sacrificed again."

And then he was gone.

I had waited for what seemed like hours, with the ghost child standing quietly by my side, for him to come back. I was hoping that he was just waiting there in the darkness and looking for a moment to pounce. . . but he never did.

Instead, I was left alone with a corpse and a ghost as company, and the night grew old. I knew after a while that he wasn't coming back, but I couldn't bring myself to leave. I couldn't bring myself to forget about everything that had happened here.

I was telling the truth when I told him I had nothing to go back to. I had no plan and no idea what to do with the rest of my life, or even what to do for the next week, and now I had to figure out how to get out of this town unseen again.

"He left," I muttered to the ghost child.

"That he did," she said, rocking on her heels. "The men in the masks are gone if you would like to leave."

I didn't have an answer for her, nor did I think I wanted to go back just yet. I was a cold, emotional wreck, and I had no idea what to do next.

". . . or you could meet my friends."

I looked up toward her, although her small form barely stood over me as I was sitting on the ground. She gave me a small smile, and I tried my best not to grimace at the sight of the mutilated side of her face moving with it.

"More ghosts?" I asked.

She nodded, then looked back toward where Z had left.

"And a demon."

In an instant, my mood had shifted, and I found myself scrambling to her. Though when I tried to grab her hands, they fell right through her form.

“Please,” I said with an edge of desperation.



*** * ***

Her friends were. . . unique, to say the least.

It was really only two. . . but it was enough to overwhelm me. The first was a grumpy, teenage ghost, he had straight, black hair—or what I assumed was black, ghost colors were muted—and wore a hoodie and

jeans. He had a permanent frown on his face that deepened when he saw me with Abby, the child. The other was an overly excited demon with blond, curly hair and red eyes, much like Z had, though this demon didn't have shadows that I could notice. He also had sharp teeth but no claws, and he seemed to be about the same size as the teenager.

They were partners. Abby had told me before we found them. They had been together for only a few years but had become inseparable. The demon had been summoned only two years prior, and this teenage boy was his sacrifice.

"I was so relieved to see that he had come back as a ghost," Tommy, as the demon liked to be called, explained as I sat down in the damp grass outside of the cemetery. "Not many humans come back as ghosts, and I knew that I had missed out on such a handsome boy by killing him."

If the ghosts could blush, I am sure Derek, the teenage ghost, would. He waved off the demon, but Tommy only shifted closer to him. I watched in fascination as the demon trailed his hand along the boy's side, but his fingers seemed to connect with the flesh.

"We come from similar places," Abby explained, seeing my confusion. "Ghosts and demons."

"So, you don't eat souls?" I asked Tommy. "Nor does it seem like you are an incubus."

He cocked his head and sent me a smile that showed all his pointed teeth.

"I should be offended, but I will let you off the hook this time," he said and leaned back, his head resting on the teenager who just scowled at him. "I am half-demon, born in the underworld to a human woman. My father made deals for souls, but I can live just fine without it." He winked at Derek. "Though I will take a nibble of his from time to time."

Before I could stop myself, I leaned forward. "Could you get me there?"

He raised a brow. "The underworld?" he asked. "Why would you want to go there?"

"Her demon fled from her," Abby explained.

Tommy made an exaggerated noise of understanding. "Well, you would need another demon to take you over the threshold," he said.

"Could you?" I asked.

"No," he said all too quickly. All the hope in my chest shriveled up and died. "My parents would be pissed I stayed here for so long, and I doubt I would ever be able to see Derek again."

"Good riddance," Derek muttered, but I saw how his eyes shift toward Tommy.

I nodded and sat back. I wouldn't break up a happy union for this.

"Soul bond," Derek said after a moment of silence. His gaze shifted toward mine. "Give up your soul to a demon, and they can turn you."

I swallowed hard.

"My soul?" I squeaked.

"That's not a bad idea," Tommy mused.

"Wait, but what would that make me?" I asked, panicked. "Would I even be the same person?"

"Well, Tommy doesn't have a soul," Abby said. "Neither did your demon."

I raised my brow at her. How could the person so lively in front of us not have a soul?

"Doesn't mean we can't feel," Tommy said. "We can still live fulfilling lives and have offspring, find some type of joy."

I swallowed thickly. “So, I would still be. . . me?”

Abby frowned. “Of course,” she answered. “Just no heaven for you. . . and you probably wouldn’t care much for others.”

“And you would need to feast on souls to live,” Tommy supplied. “Or like your demon, you could always bargain for sex. It’s how they stay sane and keep living, though in the underworld, these are commodities that are easy to find.”

“I need to think about it,” I said. There was a dull ache behind my eyes from not sleeping.

“Well, lucky for you, the next time you can do a soul bond is in a year,” Tommy said with a smile. “The veil between our world and yours is thinner on Halloween, so unless you know a demon ready to bargain with you, you are out of luck for the time being.”

A year, I thought. I can work with that.

Chapter 13

Ruby

I laughed lightly and sipped on my frozen margarita as Benji tried, unsuccessfully, to grab at Abby's thin wrist.

Anne laughed along with me, her eyes lighting up when she heard Benji let out a shout of laughter. Since last year, Anne had been the only person, besides the undead and a single demon, that I allowed near me. She had proven to me time and time again that she was separate from the cult and that her father was actually one of the few people in this town that was working against them.

It was a surprising day when they both came over and promised to help protect me as long as I joined in their little rebellion. Needless to say, I was all for a bit of rebellion and ready to do whatever I needed to get back at the cult.

There was a whole group of people that tried everything that they could to work against the cult. That included getting them fired from their day jobs, sneaking into influential people's houses, and stealing their plans, all in anticipation for the next time they decided to sacrifice an innocent life.

We had worked tirelessly until now to make sure we were all prepared for tonight. This would be the last time that they would ever murder on this town's soil; I would make sure of it.

After Benji was born, Anne spent more time around me, so it was only a matter of time before she met the ghosts that had practically glued themselves to my side. Anne freaked out, obviously. How else would you react to a ghost that had half her face chewed off?

Though she came around after a little explanation and, after a while, was even okay with Abby and Benji playing together.

“Tonight is the night,” she said and looked at me with sad eyes.

Smiling, I grabbed her hand. She had been the best friend I could have asked for during this time. It had taken me many months to finally heal from Libby’s death, but with her help, and the others, I found what I wanted to do and was actually excited at what waited for me.

“I’ll visit if I can,” I said.

“Maybe it’s best if you don’t,” she half-joked.

But she was right to be cautious. I was literally trying to throw my soul away for a chance to meet the demon that had literally wrecked my life.

Z was right about one thing; he ruined me. He ruined me so thoroughly that there was not one day that I didn’t think about him, nor one night that I didn’t dream about him.

Every morning I would wake up, excited that he was there to visit me. . . but I would be left alone in the darkness. It didn’t help that this entire house had small reminders of him, but they were the only thing keeping me from going crazy. They kept me from thinking it was all some sort of made-up dream.

The fireplace was still melted, there were scratches on the floor where he had taken me multiple times, and there were parts of the counter that had been chipped off where he had grabbed it a bit too hard.

My biggest regret was that those small reminders were all we were reduced to. A fiery yet temporary relationship fueled by sex, and I knew almost nothing about him. The only thing I really knew was that he had been locked away for years only to come out for my sacrifice, then leave back to his home.

I had pried little bits of information out of Tommy when I could, but it never gave me more of a picture of who Z really was. I longed to

understand him, and even in my dreams, when I begged him for answers, he would just show me that frightening smile of his before disappearing.

When I finally bid Anne goodbye, I had little time to get ready. The white silk slip that I had bought for just this occasion hung on my mirror, waiting for its time to shine.

Abby watched as I smoothed down the fabric and brushed through my hair.

“I’ll miss you,” I whispered to her, catching her face in the mirror. She smiled, though the pain on her face was evident.

“You’ll be back,” she said. “Though, hopefully, next time with babies.”

I rolled my eyes.

“I will be back,” I said in a firm voice. “It’s time.”



* * *

To say the cult was surprised by me volunteering as a sacrifice was the understatement of the year, but who would deny such a beautifully wrapped present?

This year, we had worked to make sure that they trusted our spy in their ranks enough for him to volunteer on my behalf. At that point, almost everyone knew of my past and was shocked that I would want to be sacrificed—again. But it sure as hell beat finding a new sacrifice.

I did have one condition, though, and luckily for me—and the plan—they allowed it.

It was not an hour later that I was placed on a stone-cold table in a tomb underneath the cemetery. The minutes passed by, and everyone watched the ringmaster of the night, waiting for the signal.

We didn't need him to say anything, though, because loud bell chimes from the town's newly built clock tower rung throughout the night, signaling that Halloween had arrived. With a shaky hand, I lifted the dagger and placed it over my stomach. My palms were sweaty, and panic rose in me faster than I had anticipated.

This was what I had planned for, this was what I had been dreaming of for the last year, but I was still scared. My eyes sought the familiar ghosts that hid in the back corner, and I was happy to see both Tommy and Derek had shown for this. Tommy nodded toward me, and it was all the reassurance I needed to slam the knife down into my stomach.

The pain pierced through me, and the breath was stolen from my lungs. It felt as though ice water was poured over my body, and I couldn't keep in the scream that was bubbling up my throat.

I couldn't hear the words the man spoke, but I could make out the noise. They were chanted, murmured in a language unknown to me, but I could feel the power in the air.

There was a flash of darkness before bright-red eyes hung over me. I was disappointed when the demon's face showed; it was not Z. . . but this person would do. They would have to; I had no choice.

"I am here to make a deal with you, demon," I said quickly. I tasted the blood pooling in my mouth. The demon smiled and licked the sides of my mouth where the blood spilled.

"Anything," he purred.

"Make me one of you," I choked out. I heard shouts, but they sounded distant. "In return, I give you my soul."

The demon's eyes widened, and I could almost feel the hunger rolling off it in waves.

“I have heard rumors of you human,” he said. “Ruby, is it?”

I nodded weakly.

Was it Z? Did he talk about me?

“I was warned to stay away,” he said and trailed his tongue across my lips. “But this is such a sweet deal; I can hardly refuse.”

“Please,” I choked out. “Hurry.”

I would be dead if he waited any longer.

“Your wish is my command.”

My vision turned black, but I could still feel the excruciating pain that radiated through my entire being. I could feel my soul being separated from my body. It was like the warmth had been sucked out of me, and I was left with a downright painful hollowness.

It felt as though my body was caving in on itself, and when I could finally pry my eyes open, I was met with the red eyes of the demon. He was smiling down at me, and I couldn’t help but smile back.

The change from human to demon was more subtle than I had thought, but I could feel my body slowly changing, and my vision got better as I stared at him longer. I could feel my hands shape into claws, and my body pulsed with a new type of power and then a need so great it caused my body to shake.

A laugh radiated from deep in my belly, and suddenly, I knew what would fill the hollowness inside me. I could taste it; they were close.

The souls.

I felt their sweetness brush up on my senses, and my mouth watered at the thought of being able to taste one.

“You’re in the perfect place for your first meal,” he said as he turned to face the group around us. “Though I do not know how you dumbasses really thought you would get away this time. Do you have a single brain cell among you?”

Even without looking down at my belly, I could feel the wound closing up, though the wound was far from my mind. As I shifted my gaze to the humans by my side, I felt my hunger take over my mind, and I pushed the demon off me so I could tackle the man who had agreed to this.

“This will be the last time that you or your cult members ever hurt another person in this town,” I growled. “I will not stop until I devour every last one of you.”

Consuming his soul was as intuitive as breathing. I could feel it and almost see the glowing outline of it around his body. Drool dripped from my lips as I stretched my mouth so wide that it felt as though my jaw might unhinge. The souls poured into me, chasing away the cold and emptiness that had come over me.

But it wasn’t enough.

“You need a deal in order to take a soul!” one of the humans yelled.

The demon who had changed me was now sitting on the place where I had been bleeding out and looking at me in interest.

“No, she doesn’t,” he said with a smile. “She was not summoned; she was born here. There is nothing obligating her to create a deal.”

There was chaos as they all ran for the exit.

“You can stay for the feast,” I offered. “Your deal is complete.” The demon shrugged and jumped off the altar.

“Why not?” he asked. “It’s been a long time since I have been truly full.”

A dark chuckle passed my lips.

Chapter 14

Z

The underworld was not all that I had remembered it to be.

My home and property were still where I had left them years before, though they had nothing on those fancy human houses I had visited in the mortal realm.

It was but a large cave that I had dug into one of the mountains that guarded the town where I was born. Most demons gathered and fed themselves in the town, though I was never one for parties or gatherings, so I just stayed in my cave trying to pass the time.

Many of my old companions had come to seek me out, some even trying to share warmth. . . though I could not bring myself to lie with another.

I was lucky I had taken so much from Ruby in the mortal realm, or else I would be dead by now. I knew that I would have to feed at some point, but that would have to wait until I was ready.

I had thought of visiting her. At least maybe in her dreams. . . but I was worried that it would be too hard to tear myself away. She deserved a chance at a normal human life, away from me, though I would be lying if I said I did not think of her often and daydream of what it would have been like if I kept her here.

I had lost count of the human days long ago, since this realm never changed, and wondered how long we had been separated for. It was always night in this realm but never cold, the perfect type of place to hide myself in. The warmth that radiated here was something I had

missed, but it still didn't compare to Ruby's as she wrapped her body around mine.

When I felt two demons near the door of my home, I let out a loud, warning growl. When they did not stop, I got louder, and then finally, when I could hear their feet shuffling outside the entrance, I threw myself forward and stormed toward them. How dare they come to test me? Everyone should know that I was not in the mood to deal with them. I paused when I felt a familiar soul reach my senses.

Throwing the cloth back, I glared at the red-eyed male who currently held the soul of Ruby. I could feel it tickling my senses, and it was reaching out to me as if asking for help.

My jaw dropped, and my shadows exploded when I saw the demon female next to him.

It looked to be Ruby, though her eyes were red like mine and her mouth was much larger than before, showing all of her spiked teeth. She did not have shadows marring her skin, though I could feel the mix of souls that resided in her. The white slip she was wearing was torn in the middle, exposing her bare stomach, and was stained with bright-red blood. Her tanned skin had a gray tint to it, and her hair was a mess around her head.

My shadows pulled inward, showing her my mortal-looking self. I was in shock; there was no way she was here on my doorstep, right? I had gone crazy, and this was my retribution. I had gone so long without feeding that I believed that Ruby was here with me when she was so obviously not.

Her lips quirked before her clawed hand raised to slap me across the face.

The male demon let out a boisterous laugh before stepping back.

"I'll leave you two lovebirds," he said.

I didn't even look at him as he walked away. I just stared at the girl in front of me.

"Is it really you?" I asked and was delivered another slap. This time, her claws nicked me and pulled blood from my cheek.

"You left me there!" she hissed. "And made me believe we had nothing!"

I had no words for her, just stared, still, not fully believing that it was her. On her next attempt to slap me, I gripped her hand and brought it to my mouth, licking her palm. She tasted the same, though I could feel the change in her skin. It was harder, the flavor not as salty as that of human skin. . . but it was undoubtedly her.

Without notice, she launched herself at me, and I was ready with open arms. Her mouth crashed into mine, and I hungrily kissed her back. I gripped her ass and pulled her close to me. She ground on my already hardening cock, and I let out a moan.

I used my shadows to rip off her underwear and pulled my hard cock out of my pants. I only removed my mouth from hers so I could hear her sweet moans as I finally sank into her.

She was just as perfect as I remembered. Her pussy was literally made for me and formed so perfectly around my cock that I was almost brought to my knees. Wasting no time, I threw her back against the wall and furiously fucked her. She arched against me and didn't hold back her moans as I rammed into her.

I growled and grabbed her ass tighter, forcing her down on me. It was everything I had been thinking of for that past year, but it wasn't enough; I needed more. I gripped her throat, enjoying the way her eyes widened.

"I told you not to make another deal," I growled and nipped at her lips. She couldn't say anything due to my hand around her neck. Getting frustrated, I moved us to the ground and continued to fuck her

while I had my hand around her throat. She was squeezing me so quickly that I knew she was going to come soon.

“You were supposed to stay there,” I growled and used my shadows to pinch her clit. She let out a choked cry. “Have a happy human life.”

Even as she came with a scream, I did not stop my assault. Instead, I turned her around so that her ass was out to me, and I sunk into her. She took my knot greedily in this position and met each of my thrusts with her own.

“Fuck, Z,” she cried. Her hands were gripping into the stone below, her claws leaving scratches. “Harder, please.”

I obliged, forcing her hips back to meet my thrusts.

“God, I missed this cunt,” I growled, feeling her tightening once more around me. My shadows attacked her, massaging her clit, pinching her nipples, and even delving into that sweet ass of hers. Her sounds were like music to my ears, and I couldn’t get enough of them.

I came along with her, my body shuddering from the intensity of it, and for the first time in a year, I felt it seep deep into my bones, feeding me. I let out a groan and pulled out of her.

I turned her back around and planted a kiss on her bruised lips.

“I am never letting you go; you know that, right?” I asked, finally accepting that my wildest dream had actually come true.

She smiled and left a small kiss on my nose. “That was kinda the whole point,” she said with a giggle.

I could get used to the sound, I realized.

“Now tell me,” I said, trailing my claws down her body. “Which souls got you so filled?”

Her eyes shone, and the cave was once again filled with her laughter.

THE END.

Acknowledgments

If you made it this far... how you holden up there?

Anyways, thanks for reading! This came out of my 2 a.m. thoughts and with the help of my instagram followers (follow me @ellemaebook) we got a fantastically smutty story that has absolutely zeros plot and only vibes.

This was a good break from everything and I hope you enjoyed it as much as I enjoyed writing it!

Want more smut?

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About the Author



Elle is a native Californian who has lived in Los Angeles for most of her life. From the very start, she has been in love with all things fantasy and reading. As soon as Elle found out that writing books could be a career, she picked up a pen and paper. While the first ones were about scorned love and missed opportunities of lunchtime love, she has grown to love the fantasy genre and looks forward to making a difference in the world with her stories.

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